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AUTHOR Sommers, Nancy
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ABSTRACT

To describe and analyze the revision processes of a group of college freshmen and a group of experienced adult writers, eight freshman students and seven experienced adult writers were asked to write three compositions, rewrite each composition two times, suggest revisions for a composition written by an anonymous author, and be interviewed three times. The students wrote their compositions in a class as a regular class activity while the adults wrote their compositions in their own homes or in their offices. Writing tasks consisted of expressive, explanatory, and persuasive writing. Findings show that the student writers have operational procedures for revising and reasons to explain their procedures, but that they have not codified or synthesized the procedures into a theory of the revision process. The experienced writers, on the other hand, have a codified set of principles about how their revision process works. For the experienced writers revision was not a stage but rather a process that occurred throughout their writing. Their first drafts were already the results of an elaborate revision process in which their revision theories operated to reject some ideas and to select others. Thus, the evidence from this study calls for a rejection of the linear stage theory since that theory does not describe the behavior of experienced writers. An alternate theoretical model is the concept of dissonance in which the writers sense dissonance, tolerate dissonance, and resolve dissonance, thereby reflecting the recursive process of revision. (HOD)

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REVISION STRATEGIES OF STUDENT WRITERS AND EXPERIENCED ADULT WRITERS

NANCY SOMMERS
JUNE 12, 1982

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Introduction

Research in the field of written composition has been conditioned in large part by two major concerns: (1) A concern with problems of application, or teaching methodologies, rather than with problems of theory. (2) A concern with describing the composing process as a series of stages.

The field of composition has traditionally been an applied discipline, and in keeping with this tradition, composition research has usually been directed towards pedogogical goals. The field is dominated by studies with methodological and pedogogical intentions. For decades researchers have focused their energies towards defending classroom techniques and trying to solve the proverbial quest--why are students not learning to write and how can we better teach them? Of the 504 studies conducted before 1963, listed in Research in Written Composition, 502 studies are instructional studies and only two studies are even indirectly concerned with theoretical investigations of the composing process.

A search through back issues since 1963 of Research in the Teaching of English, College Composition and Communication, College English, and Dissertation Abstracts yields a plethora of methodology studies. Whatever is culturally or intellectually in vogue seems to have been tested to see what effects these

methods might have upon the written products of students. Studies with titles such as, "Teaching Composition with a Problem-Solving Approach," "The Effects of Role-Playing on the Improvement of Writing," or "The Effect of Bio-Feedback Training on the quality of College Students' Writing" represent the direction composition research has taken.

The problem with many of these numerous, sometimes conflicting, instructional studies is that they lack a clearly articulated theoretical base and have not only yielded very little towards a theory of the composing process, but also have restricted our thinking about composition to classroom problems. Instead of working with theoretical problems about the nature of written language, too much composition research has been aimed at developing new methods of teaching or trying to find out which method is most effective.

By emphasizing methodology over theory, researchers have blurred the important distinction between the teaching of writing and learning how to write; we do not yet understand how effective writers write outside of classroom situations or what sound writing techniques are, and yet we are inundated with research on divergent methods of teaching composition.

Consequently, the direction of most composition research has been backwards. This concern for methodology over theory is similar to a concern for a technology before there is a science to support it. Steinman (1975) has

suggested that the almost universally acknowledged failure of freshman composition is chiefly due to the lack of any basic theoretical support. The teaching of composition remains a technology without, and not even in search of, a science.

What would seem to be missing for the development of a theoretical base is a serious questioning about the cognitive processes involved in writing. There has been no research on basic questions such as, what governs the lexical, syntactical, and rhetorical choices a writer makes or what neuro-linguistic and psycho-linguistic mechanisms are involved in the writing process. We hypothesize that composing is a complex cognitive activity that engages visual, motor, and cognitive competencies, but we lack a process grammar--a set of statements on how the composing process works. Undoubtedly, some of our assumptions about composing implicit in various methodologies will be challenged when we know more about the composing process.

In what studies there have been on the composing process, lacking a theoretical base, yet needing a way to get a grasp upon this complex process called composing, researchers began to describe the composing process in terms of stages. In 1964, Rohman and Wlecke's, "Pre-writing: The Construction and Application of Models for Concept Formation in Writing," was the first study on the composing process.*

*In 1946, Van Brugeen, in an experiment using a kymograph, measured the transcription process, or the "rate of flow" of words while junior high school students wrote compositions. VanBrugeen sought to correlate "word flow" with the various compositional, academic, personal, and environmental factors.
(cont.)

Rohman and Wlecke's operational definition of the composing process was, "Writing is usually described as a process, something which shows continuous change in time like growth in organic nature. Different things happen at different stages in the process of putting words on to paper. We divided the process at the point where the writing idea is ready for the words and the page: everything before that we call pre-writing, everything after writing and rewriting." (Rohman and Wlecke, 1964, p. 9)

Two essential ideas about the Rohman and Wlecke study must be understood since their definition of the composing process provided the framework for Emig's (1971) study on "The Composing Process of Twelfth Graders", and for numerous researchers since 1971 who have used Emig's study as a model.

(1) Although pre-writing, for Rohman and Wlecke, was a contemporary transformation of the classical rhetorical concept of invention, they used the term to carry a dual meaning; pre-writing represented both a stage in the writing process and the various methodological strategies which can be used to encourage the discovery process.

(2) Rohman and Wlecke segmented the composing process into three distinct stages: pre-writing, writing, and

*(cont.) A unique study methodologically, and the first study to focus upon the transcription process of students, the report is unconclusive since Van Brugeen was unable to derive any theoretical perspectives from his data. (Van Brugeen 1946)

rewriting. By their definition, pre-writing is understood both in very tempora l terms (the time before you start writing) and in very qualitative terms (as a period of discovery and insight.) According to their concept of the composing process, whatever goes on during the pre-writing stage is characteristically different from what goes on during the writing and rewriting stages.

Rohman and Wlecke's stage conception of the composing process has had a decidedly pervasive influence upon the field of composition. Despite the fact that Rohman and Wlecke's study was an experiment in instruction and that their categories were arbitrary lines of demarcation, researchers have continued to use these categories a priori, equating these stages with discrete temporal and qualitative junctures in the composing process. Composition specialists quickly jumped to develop new methodologies using Rohman and Wlecke's stage conception without even asking whether such stages exist, and without questioning the theoretical soundness of such a conception.

The effect of this stage notion can be found in the direction of composition research since 1964. Methodology researchers have asked how students can be influenced during the pre-writing stage of the process (Odell 1973; Kytle, 1972), or in the rewriting stage of the process (Effros, 1971; Kelley, 1975; Hansen, 1971). Researchers have sought to describe and characterize the distinguishing composing

behaviors of students during all three stages, pre-writing, writing, and rewriting (Emig, 1971; Stallard, 1972; Mischel, 1973). Emig's premise was that there are elements, moments, and stages within the composing process which can be distinguished and characterized in some detail. Composition teachers have been prompted to teach writing as a three-stage process, not as a product (Murray, 1972), and the three stages of the composing process became the organizing principle for many composition textbooks. These texts sought to convince students of the necessity to direct their energies to all three stages of the process if they were to produce an effective essay (Gehle and Rollo, 1977; Grey, 1972). Grey (1972) diagrammed the stages of the composing process for students this way (Fig. 1):

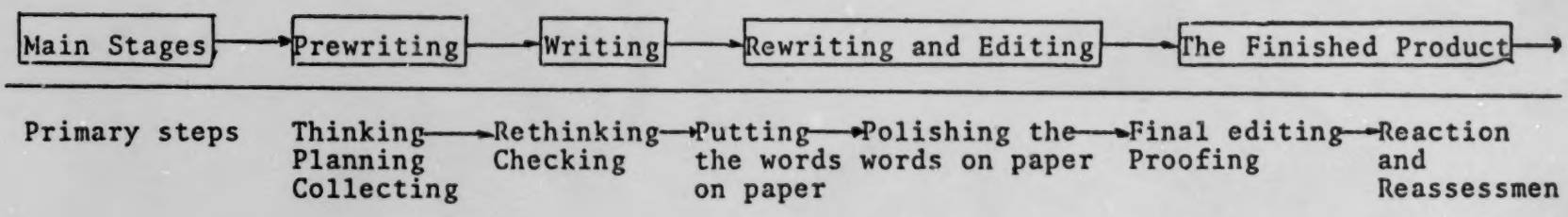
This linear stage model of the composing process is a metaphorical description and as with all metaphors or analogies it has the potential of being either helpful or misleading. The crucial question is whether the similarities the metaphor captures are significant or superficial. With this metaphorical description of the composing process, what seems to be missing is a serious questioning of the underlying assumptions of the linear stage model. If we say that the composing process can be described as a series of stages, what does this say about our conception of how a writer writes: Are we saying that composing is a linear and one-directional process? And if so, what are the requirements of this linear system?

Figure 1

Linear Stage Model

The writing process in overview, in general

Main stages and primary steps



A linear system, according to systems theory, demands that we must be able to recover past states and predict future states of the system as when we develop a photograph or when we follow a prescribed recipe. If composing was only such a linear activity, then we should be able to construct a behavioral checklist in which we predict that at a given point a writer should be in the thinking stage of the process, then he will gather information, then he will write, and then he will rewrite. If these stages were reliable and valid junctures, then we should have completion criteria for each stage so that we could tell when one stage is terminated and another begins. Each stage must be mutually exclusive or else it becomes trivial and counterproductive to refer to these junctures as stages.

With our present state of knowledge, we lack a finite set of criteria by which we could judge where one stage of the process begins and the other ends, and it seems neither adequate nor helpful only to describe composing as a linear sequence of stages. It is probably true that any observable behavior, including composing, must unfold linearly over time, but inasmuch as we are able to see significant recurring patterns in a linear sequence of events, we can hypothesize that the composing process is both linear and recursive. Thus, it is possible to view the composing process as not just a linear series of stages, but rather as a hierarchial set of sub-processes. Such an understanding of the composing process yields the conception of the writer moving in a

series of non-linear movements from one sub-process to another while he constantly moves the force of his attention among matters of content, style, and structure; solving continuous sets and sub-sets of complex cognitive, lexical, syntactical, and rhetorical problems. It is not that a writer merely conceives of an idea, lets it incubate, and then produces it, but rather that he is constantly defining, and redefining, selecting and rejecting, evaluating and organizing ideas. The idea of a process suggests not just one, but a series of on-going activities. While a writer composes he is simultaneously forced into a multiplicity of roles--writer, reader, discover, censor, critic, editor. The pre-writing, writing, rewriting model of the composing process better describes the written product than the process, as it identifies stages in producing the product and not the operations of the process.

In our haste to discuss process not product, we have continued to use the same nomenclature to describe process as we used to describe product and have not developed the necessary vocabulary to discuss the sub-processes of the composing process. This distinction between process and product has been difficult to maintain; in the act of talking about process we reify it into product.

The following schema is offered as an alternative to the stage model description of the composing process and as a framework for the diverse usage of the term process.

A process can be: (1) A sequence across time of connected events which are believed to be causally linked to a particular result.

(2) A series of operations that can recur again and again.

(3) A series of circumstances that lead to certain results.

(1) A sequence across time of connected events which are believed to be causally linked to a particular result.

(A) The composing process begins with those events which lead up to the decision to begin writing.
(B) The evolution of an idea in a given piece of writing; the initial idea extended and refined.
(C) The steps of outline/first draft/redraft or first draft/outline/redraft.

(2) A series of operations that recur again and again.

(A) On the observable level, there are pauses, hesitations, scanning, and rereading.
(B) The intersection of different mental and physical activities; the encoding and decoding processes.
(C) Strategies used, such as revision strategies: consideration of reader, recognition of the difference between speech and writing, syntactical and lexical reformulations.

(3) A series of circumstances that lead to certain results.

(A) Developmental circumstances: how students' writing develops, the process of mastering different kinds of writing, the stages in the development of abilities. The development of writing abilities from writing assignment to assignment, each assignment is seen as a stepping stone.
(B) Contextual circumstances: Internal--the habits of a writer, writing behaviors, idiosyncrasies, preferences and psychological influences. External--the situation, the reason for writing, the environment, etc.

Focus of Study: Revision

The arbitrary segmentation of the composing process into stages has created perceptual boundaries for composition researchers. As Kenneth Burke has remarked, "A way of seeing is also a way of not seeing." Revision has been conventionally perceived as a stage in the writing process--the stage at the end of the process. Revision has been narrowly defined as a separate stage that comes after the completion of a first or second draft, and one that can be singularly and temporally distinguished from the pre-writing and writing stages. Our understanding of which activities or sub-processes constitute the revision process has been skewed by our temporal stage-bound notion of the composing process.

Revision continues to be one of the most ignored areas of composition research. Pre-writing has been associated with discovery, cognition, and memory, and numerous researchers have moved to the domain of pre-writing. (See Young's (1976) bibliographical essay on Invention.) Revision, viewed as a stage at the end of the process, after a writer has already discovered, cogitated, and remembered, is regarded as an isolated non-creative activity. This pallid perspective on revision and the absence of any significant research is clearly evidenced in the most recent and comprehensive scholarly publications on the composing process: Winterowd's, Contemporary Rhetoric: A Conceptual Background and Readings (1975), Tate's, Teaching Composition: Ten

Bibliographical Essays (1976), and Shaughnessy's, Errors and Expectations (1977). In his book of essays on contemporary rhetoric, Winterowd (1975) makes this comment in his introduction, "Since there is no discussion of revision in the book, the subject is worth investigating briefly at this point." What follows is a short discussion of the four operations involved in reformulating a sentence. The Tate and Shaughnessy books are "superb examples of the new kinds of books being written about composition. The best place to learn what is going on in the field is in Tate's collection... and Shaughnessy's book is a storehouse of good sense...." (Brereton, 1976) Yet the fact that neither the Winterowd nor the Tate collections contain even one theoretical or applied discussion on revision and that Shaughnessy's book ignores the importance of revision for Basic Writing Students is evidence that whatever good research is going on in the field, it is clearly not focused on the revision process.

The information that we do possess about the revision process can be found in three main sources: Reports by and about established writers, compositon textbooks, and empirical research in the field of composition.

Reports by and about Established Writers

> Whatever the process, it must be a disciplined one, good writing is rewriting; not merely inspired spillage.
>
> John Ciardi

The journals, notebooks, letters, and autobiographical essays of established writers are filled with comments on the habits, the internal and external pressures, and the psychological moments that influenced the revision of specific works. Whether they actually use the term revising, redrafting, rewriting, changing, or just call it writing, the implication in the published testimonies of writers is that writing is an exploratory and investigative act and that revising is part of the generative nature of the composing process. James Joyce once pointed out that it is in the writing that "the good things come out." And E. M. Forster's question, "How do I know what I think until I see what I say?", has been repeatedly echoed by various writers. What emerges from these accounts by established writers is that revision is not a stage, but a process that occurs throughout the writing of a work: revision is making a work congruent with what a writer intends.

When John Updike was asked, "What do various versions reveal about the act of writing?", he responded: "If I were to draw a conclusion from such a set of variants, it would be, not that the author increasingly approximates a pre-envisioned ideality, but that at each revision, he seeks to judge the parts relative to each other, and to achieve something like total congruency or inter-lockingness. Almost every good thing must be revised not once, but several times. Only by conscientious reworking of your manuscripts can you achieve something like total congruency or inter-lockingness."

Most of the information that we can gather from established writers on revision is characteristically anecdotal. We have testimonies from writers about how important revision is, "As you continue writing and revising you begin to see possibilities you hadn't seen before" (Robert Hayden); or about how much they enjoy it, "A first draft will usually have too many adjectives; it's work, all work, but I love that honing, it is quite a beautiful thing once you really get into it" (Grace Paley); or how much they despise it, "The business of selection and of revision is simply hell for me--my efforts to cut out 50,000 words may sometimes result in my adding 75,000" (Thomas Wolfe). Even the four series of the Paris Review Interviews of Writers at Work, which are reputed to be "sensitive and adroit exercises in getting contemporary writers to reveal themselves" (Kazin, 1967), remain picaresque anecdotes. The interviews are filled with accounts about the "writers' requisites"--the time of day most propitious for revision or the tools of the trade which are most useful. The interviews are amusing--Evelyn Waugh arrives for his interview only to get into bed wearing a pair of white pajamas and smoking a cigar, and William Burroughs makes his writing habits sound as technically complicated as the adding machine his grandfather developed.

What is characteristically absent from these interviews, however, is an examination of the act of writing or of a given text and its revisions. The clearest set of "Lessons from the Master" that can be extrapolated from

these interviews are the degree to which writers resist any serious probing into their work and how much, as Blaise Cendrars claims in his interview, "writers like to exaggerate the difficulties of writing in order to make themselves sound interesting."

Although these published accounts by established writers on their own writing processes do make engaging reading, they do not provide us with much systematic information about the actual operations of the revision process, nor about the subtle reasons that motivated specific revisions. They are limited, also, by what the writers consciously believe they do or what legendary impression the writer wants to imprint upon his readership. The classic discussion of this exact problem is found in Poe's essay, "The Philosophy of Composition", in which Poe suggests that 'authorial vanity' might be the reason writers don't want to show the 'modus operandi' by which their works were put together. Most writers, Poe claimed, "prefer having it understood that they compose by a species of fine frenzy--an ecstatic intuition--and would positively shudder at letting the public take a peep behind the scenes, at the elaborate and vacillating crudities of thought--at the true purposes seized only at the last moment--at the cautious selections and rejections--at the painful erasures and interpolations--in a word, at the wheels and pinions--the tackle for scene shifting--the step ladders and demon traps--the cock's feathers, the red paint, and black patches, which in ninety-nine cases out of the hundred, constitute the properties of the literary 'histrio'."

Composition Textbooks

Textbooks abound. We are oversubscribed with copious discourses on the revision process intended as instructions for students. These texts have established and perpetuated a shared system of beliefs on how a writer revises and continue to give students prescriptive maxims. The greatest problem with these 'prescriptions' is that one wonders where the information that they based on comes from and whether there is any authority to the formulaic conception of revision which the texts describe.

In most textbooks the chapters on revision are devoted to grammar and mechanics and there is a notable imprecision in the terminology used. Such terms as revision, rewriting, editing, proofreading, correcting, and polishing are used interchangably and ambiguously. An examination of 15 composition texts yields 23 terms used synonymously with revision:

Rewriting	Proofreading	Rechecking	Rewording
Reformulation	Editing	Rethinking	Reconceptualizing
Redrafting	Correcting	Restructuring	Realigning
Recreating	Polishing	Reorganizing	Reassembling
Recasting	Remaking	Remolding	Manuscript Preparation
Reviewing	Rearranging	Redesigning	

The following paragraph is taken from the introductory paragraph in a chapter entitled, "Revising and Polishing."

> And the (final aspect) of the composing process is revision. Any writer who achieves excellence writes and rewrites. (After he writes,) he checks and rechecks the topic of each paragraph and examines and orders the supporting statements. He scrutinizes the structure of each sentence, the choice of every word, grooming and polishing his

paper, all the while rechecking for grammatical and mechanical accuracy. He revises and revises.

Certain operative words have been underlined and bracketed as they reflect not only the imprecision of the language that is associated with revision, but also two very dominant messages that composition texts continue to preserve. (1) As the underlined verbals indicate, revision is equated with cleanliness; to revise is to groom, to polish, to order, and to tidy-up one's writing. The message communicated to students is that revision is the act of cleaning prose of all its linguistic litter. (2) The use of the bracketed phrases, "the final aspect" and "after he writes" equate revision with an activity that is separate in quality and isolated in time from writing. This conception of revision as an activity that is fixed in time and space is reinforced by the structure of many composition texts. These texts are arranged linearly and chronologically with the three stages of the composing process. The 'medium becomes the message' as the idea is communicated to students that revision is that interlude after you finish writing the first draft and before you type the paper.

In many textbooks the word revision is synonymously used with the words check and recheck. The caricature of the hapless student who is constantly exhorted to check his spelling, or check his grammar, finds its logical conclusion in the check-lists which constitute many chapters on revision.

These check-lists specify the order and nature of the steps that need to be followed as if revision were formulaic. This check-list conception suggests that if one could consciously and willingly answer yes to a series of supposedly equally important elements, then one's composition would be perfectly polished and therefore perfectly "revised."

Perrin and Corder in their Handbook of Current English presented a four category check-list: content, organization, wording, and accuracy; and four sub-categories within each category. This check-list technique of revision encourages students to see revision as something imposed from outside, rather than something that emerges during the writing process. It also suggests to students that an essay exists as a series of categories and is not to be regarded holistically.

One text devoted entirely to revision, Perlman and Perlman's Guide to Rapid Revision, states in a note to the composition instructor, "This text is planned with the realities of revision in mind and provides the student with immediate answers to the specific problems he encounters." And to the student they write, "You will find this text to be the remedy you need against the headaches of revision." The dominant message in this text is that revision is an odious activity that can be tranquilized and cured in short order by the rapid method that the text proposes. Their guide is alphabetically arranged to accelerate the revision process and cartoon characters are used to energize the deadly subject of revision.

Even McCrimmon's text, Writing with a Purpose, unquestionably one of the msot solid and thoughtful texts in the field, has difficulties with revision. McCrimmon's emphasis in his revision chapter is upon "pruning deadwood from sentences," and he provides good examples for the student to practice revising sentences for clarity, emphasis, economy, and variety. McCrimmon tells students that "truly effective sentences are more often rewritten than written," but the text does not look at revision beyond the sentence level, to the paragraph, or to the essay as a whole. McCrimmon, in the sixth edition of his text, uses the fashionable stage-notion of the composing process to organize his text and the heaviest emphasis is placed upon pre-writing.

Given the uncertainty of the textbook genre, it is difficult to condemn texts for what they fail to include. However, for a theoretical understanding of the strategies and operations of the revision process, the information in composition textbooks is usually too incomplete to be helpful. The messages of these texts remain on the most general level, never revealing the subtlties of the process, and clashing in many direct ways with accounts given by established writers about their processes. Textbooks do not answer these essential questions:

(1) Do established writers use a check-list method of revision?

(2) How does a student know where and when to begin revising and when to stop? What are the "rules" for deciding?

(3) How does a student revise beyond the sentence level?

(4) What assumptions do students have about the revision process and how do the messages of the textbooks either confirm or deny their assumptions?

Empirical Research in the field of Composition

Composition researchers have been preoccupied with problems of application rather than with problems of theory; theoretical research on the revision process is embryonic in contrast to the senectitude of instructional studies. These instructional studies focus upon the question, "Is it valuable for a student to revise his paper after it has been graded?" and the concomitant question, "What type of teacher-intervention has the greatest influence on a student's writing performance and subsequent revisions?" Revision is viewed in these studies as merely another instructional variable that might influence the production of a composition in a classroom, and is usually tested in combination with other instructional variables such as delayed grades, peer-evaluation, intensive evaluation, or frequency of writing. The two most popular variables to be coupled are frequency of writing and intensive teacher correction; these are then tested to see what influence they might have upon the quality of a student's revisions. (Buxton, 1958; Heys, 1962; Clark, 1968; Hansen, 1971) The findings of these studies are contradictory and do not present any conclusive evidence as to which variable, frequency of writing or intensive

teacher correction, influences students' writing, or even if these two variables do have any influence. Hansen concluded that, "The act of revising and rewriting does not in itself result in improved composition skills and...teachers need to spend more classroom time on the why and how of revision; revision needs to be taught, not assigned" (Hansen, 1971). The strongest point these studies do make is what does not make a difference rather than what does make a difference when teachers intervene in a student's revision process. It has yet to be documented which aspects of composition are learned better through revision and what effect, if any, teacher intervention has upon the revision of such important elements as organization, development of ideas, or supporting details.

In 1971, Emig's case study of eight twelfth graders was the first non-instructional attempt to research the composing process of students. Emig's conclusions on revision, however, must be met with some hesitation since the design of Emig's study did not allow time for subjects to revise. Emig's subjects composed aloud in four writing sessions; each session was treated as a self-contained unit, ninety minutes per session. Emig used the term <u>reformulation</u> and referred to reformulation as the seventh stage in the ten stages of the composing process. Emig concluded in her profile of Lynn, "Reformulating, stopping, and contemplating (Ed: stopping and contemplating are the eighth and ninth stages in the process) are treated in a single section because

in Lynn's process of writing they take up so little time that they almost coalesce into a single barely occurring experience. Partially because of the design and the conduct of the inquiry, but seemingly far more because of her attitude toward revising, Lynn does not really reformulate any of the three pieces she wrote....Students do not voluntarily revise school-sponsored writing...." (Emig 1971)

Emig's conclusions about Lynn's attitude toward revision might be accurate, but her line of reasoning begs important questions. If Emig's design had been different, if the investigator had either allowed time for revisions or even encouraged revisions, would Lynn have revised? If Lynn had been composing silently on paper rather than aloud would she have revised? And if revision would not have been perceived in the conventional fashion as a stage, would Emig have examined the revisions which Lynn made as she composed?

Stallard (1972) questioned what happens when good writers attack a writing task, and attempted to to answer that question by examining the behavior of good twelfth grade writers. What is singularly significant about the Stallard study is that revision was not seen in a temporal dimension, nor as a stage in the process, but rather in an all-encompassing way as any co r rections, changes, additions to, or deletions from what was originally written. Stallard tabulated the number of revisions made by his group of good writers, and found that they made 12.24 per paper. Stallard found that the major emphasis during revision was on word

choice, a finding which supported the statements made by students that they worried about communicating their meaning. The good student writers changed more words as they wrote; most of the changes were single word changes, but a significant number of multiple word changes occurred also.

Beach (1975) conducted an informal exploratory study with a group of college juniors and seniors in which he focused upon the "self-evaluation" strategies used by two groups of students; those who constantly revised their drafts extensively ("extensive revisers") and those who consistently revised very little or not at all ("nonrevisers"). The assumption in the Beach study is that students should write several drafts of their essay, each draft representing an extensive revision of a previous draft. It is also assumed that the fact that students' often do not revise their drafts reflects their inabilities to effectively evaluate their own writing. The inherent difficulty with these assumptions, as has been pointed out by Dietrich (1976) in his counterstatement to Beach, is that Beach assumes in his study that there is an inherent worth to extensive revision. Beach equates extensive revisers with good revisers, the more a student revises, the more a student was judged as being able to "self-evaluate" what needed to be done in a piece of writing. Several questions raised by the Beach study remain unanswered. Is there any reason to believe that students who usually make extensive revisions are any better or any

worse writers than students who usually don't make extensive revisions? If so, is there any reason to believe that their revision practices contribute to the difference? Beach's study, however, has shown that a promising direction for composition research is the study of how writers' knowledge of the composing process influences their writing behaviors.

In Britton's (1975) descriptive chapter on "The Writing Process," in The Development of Writing Abilities, there is a highly detailed and definitive examination of writing as a complex cognitive activity. Of the twenty-nine pages in the chapter, only 1 1/2 pages are devoted to revision, yet within those dense 1 1/2 pages are several powerful observations that demand further analysis. Britton characterized revision as the time when the writer becomes the reader of his own work. He made the important distinction between those revisions which writers make because they have changed their mind and those where they feel they have not succeeded in representing their thought. Britton, drawing upon the work of Vygotsky, argues that the important relationship between language and thought is evidenced during revision, as a writer may not completely know what he thinks or what he wants to say until his thoughts are fully formulated in words; but also it is the case that a writer can tell when the words he has used have not achieved the embodiment of his thoughts sufficiently to provide the satisfaction he must feel before he is prepared to let the completed writing go to the reader.

Empirical research on the revision process can be described by four general characteristics.

(1) Most of the research on revision has been pedagogical in nature. Revision is viewed in these studies as merely another instructional variable that might influence the production of a composition in a classroom.

(2) Researchers have used the linear stage model description of the composing process and have viewed revision as the stage at the end of the process.

(3) Researchers have examined the changes students made after they finished writing, not those changes they made in the process of writing.

(4) Researchers have concluded that students do not willingly revise.

In spite of the attention that professional writers have given to articulating the principles they use, there has been little research to examine the congruence between professional writers' theories of written language and the writing they produce. Moreover, there are still numerous unanswered questions as to how the theories of professional writers evolved and how these theories contrast with the theories of student writers.

Purpose of this Study

This study developed from the observation that if revision is part of the generative nature of the composing process, and not an isolated stage in the process as the pre-writing, writing, and rewriting model assumes, then we need

to examine the revision process from a theoretical and non-temporal perspective in order to understand what activities and sub-processes constitute revision. Our understanding of revision has been limited by the categories and classifications we have created and only by translating the problem into a new theoretical language will we be able to discover possibilities for understanding that were not possible within the established idiom of the composition discipline.

This study will contrast the revision processes of college freshmen and experienced adult writers. We lack adequate theoretical and empirical data on the composing processes of college freshmen and of adults who are experienced writers, but not professional writers. A tradition has been created within the discipline in which we have a caste society, composed of the "ideal" professional writer and the "underclass", the student writer. And although we recognize that there is a quantum leap between the abilities of professional writers and college freshmen, we continue to use the idealized standard of composing behaviors of professionals as the model for students to imitate. This study of revision can do much to dispel what Joyce referred to as the "Burgher Notion", the poet Byron in un-dress pouring out verses, just as a city fountain pours out water. Such a notion is responsible for discouraging students and for allowing both students and compositon researchers to mythologize the composing process of professional writers.

In this study the revision process is simply defined as a sequence of changes in the composition; these changes are initiated by cues and occur throughout the writing of a work.

Seven broad questions have guided this study:

(1) What is the revision process of student writers? What is the revision process of experienced adult writers?

(2) What role does revision play in the composing process of these writers?

(3) How does a writer recognize the lack of congruency between what the work does and what the writer intends for it to do? What are the lexical, syntactical, and semantic cues that tell the writer?

(4) What strategies do the writers use to make the work congruent with what they intend it to be?

(5) Do revision strategies hold consistent within the three discourse types: expressive, explanatory, persuasive? What kinds of revisions can be predicted from the different discourse types?

(6) Do writers have theories of the revision process? If so, how do these theories provide the categories that are the basis for their revisions?

(7) Can a theory be developed which would explain how a writer knows when to change something, how to change something, what to change, and how to know to stop?

CHAPTER II

METHODOLOGY

Case Study

The major objectives of this case study were:

(1) To describe and analyze the revision processes of a group of college freshmen and a group of experienced adult writers.

(2) To determine the similarities and the differences within and between these two groups.

(3) To use these findings as a basis for developing a theory of the revision process.

The case study is a traditional methodology for basic research used most effectively when there are large voids of knowledge. In Research in Written Composition, Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, and Schoer suggested the importance of using a case study approach: "Case studies have done much to help remedial reading specialists understand and assist their 'clients', and the similar complexities of writing suggest that much may be gained by developing case study procedures, against a background of experimental group research, to investigate the factors affecting the learning of composition and the procedures which will accelerate and maintain learning." (Braddock, Lloyd-Jones, Schoer, 1963, p. 32). Since the Braddock, et al. report, the case study as a mode of inquiry involving one writer or a small sample of writers has been shown to be a legitimate and useful

methodology for the alert and sensitive observations that the composing process demands (Emig, 1969; Graves, 1973; Mischel, 1974; Perl, 1978).

Eight freshmen students and seven experienced adult writers served as subjects for this case study. All subjects wrote three compositions, rewrote each composition two times, suggested revisions for a composition written by an anonymous author, and were interviewed three times. The students wrote their compositions in class as a regular class activity. Adults were allowed to write their compositions in their own homes or in their offices, but otherwise followed the same schedule as the students. (See Table 1 for schedule.)

TABLE I

Writing and Interview Schedule

Writing Task #1	Focus on Writer	Expressive Writing
Monday	60 minutes of writing	Day 1
Wednesday	60 minutes of writing	Day 2
Friday	60 minutes of writing	Day 3
Monday	90 minute interview	Interview 1
	2 week interval	
Writing Task #2	Focus on Topic	Explanatory Writing
Monday	60 minutes	Day 1
Wednesday	60 minutes	Day 2
Friday	60 minutes	Day 3
Monday	45 minute interview	Interview 2
	2 week interval	
Writing Task #3	Focus on Reader	Persuasive Writing
Monday	60 minutes	Day 1
Wednesday	60 minutes	Day 2
Friday	60 minutes	Day 3
Monday	45 minute interview	Interview 3

Subjects:

Students:

In order to represent a contrasting range of writing abilities from inexperienced to experienced, eight college freshmen served as inexperienced student writers. These eight students were randomly selected from a section of Freshman Composition, English 104, at Boston University, taught during Fall Semester 1977 by the investigator of this study. Freshmen students at Boston University who receive SAT verbal scores between 410-610 are placed in English 104. The eight students in this study received SAT verbal scores ranging from 450-580 with a mean score of 541. These students, as a group, are representative of freshmen students who are separated in age and experience from the group of experienced adult writers and who could potentially achieve the level of writing abilities of the experienced adult writers, thus allowing for comparison with the adult group. The following table presents some demographic information about these student writers.

TABLE 2

STUDENT WRITERS

Name	Age	SAT Verbal Score	Proposed Major
Aaron	19	560	Film
Ben	18	550	Public Relations
Daniel	19	560	Journalism
Edward	18	580	English
Jeremy	19	490	Sociology
Jonathan	19	580	Economics
Michael	18	530	Management
Stephen	19	480	Nursing

Adults:

Seven adults, who are experienced writers but not established professional writers, served as subjects. Three adults who began the study dropped out after the first writing. One adult moved away, another had too much of her own work to do, and a third claimed that it, "wasn't good if the intellect examines too closely the ideas pouring in at the gates." The adults who participated in the study responded to notices which the investigator posted in public libraries and universities in Boston and Cambridge requesting volunteers for a study on the writing process. They submitted two samples of their writing to the investigator before beginning the study. The following table presents some demographic information about these adult writers.

TABLE 3

EXPERIENCED WRITERS

Name	Age	Level of Education	Profession	Publications
Debra	34	Ph. D.	Near-Eastern Scholar	Academic Articles
Diana	39	M. A.	Free-lance Writer	Feature Articles
Johana	32	Ph. D.	Harvard Junior Fellow	Poetry and Essays
Leah	25	M. A.	English Teacher	Poetry and Essays
Rebecca	25	LL. D.	Lawyer Journalist	Legal and Political Articles
Sarah	39	M. S.	Editor Artist	Art & Book Revi Feature Articles

Name	Age	Level of Education	Profession	Publications
Sonya	26	B. A.	Social Activist	Book and Short stories Political Essays

Coding of Subjects

To refer to the two groups, the terms student writers and experienced writers are used. These categories were chosen because the principal difference between the two groups was the amount of experience they have had in writing.

The student writers and experienced writers are given code names for the sake of clarity and immediate recognition. Since sex differences are not a variable in this study, the student writers are given male names and the experienced writers are given female names.

Writing Tasks

Gudied by the discourse theory of Kinneavy (1971) and the schema for classifying written discourse of Britton and his colleagues (1975), the investigator asked each subject to produce three pieces of writing in the major discourse types of written language: expressive, explanatory, and persuasive. Each discourse type is assumed to have its own function, organizational patterns, and its own language, and the investigator questioned whether revision strategies would change across discourse types or would hold consistent within these discourse types. What follows is a brief definition of the discourse types and the corresponding writing tasks:

Expressive: The focus is on the writer and the writing remains close to the self. Its purpose is to reveal the writer, to verbalize consciousness, to express perceptions, feelings, attitudes, moods, or opinions. Expression in writing can take the form of a diary or journal entry dealing with the writer's preoccupations of the moment, a personal letter to a friend, or even a piece directed at a public audience assumed to share the writer's values and opinions.

Expressive writing task--writing #1

"You are of average height, average weight, average speed, an d typical. Yet typical means conforming to a particular type. You conform to a nondescript type. Going unnoticed is your style. It's as if your components were mass produced, standard bland, like a slice of American bread--no crust, no identity. For you, spare parts, replacements, are always in stock. The National Safety Council, the United States Bureau of Statistics, the March of Dimes, and the Surgeon General even know exactly when you will die."

Think about this quotation. Do you seethe at such a description or does such a description describe your feelings about yourself? Do you live with the sense of your own uniqueness, your own singular untameable and untranslatable nature? Write a two-page description of YOURSELF that indicates your reaction to the sentiments expressed in the above quotation.

Explanatory: The focus is on the information, not on the writer. As in all explanatory writing, the conventions governing its use presuppose that facts should be right, assertions true, comments relevant, arguments consistent (Britton,

1975). Much professional writing in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities takes this form. The writer combines several observations or instances, rather than focusing on a single one, and distance between the writer and his material is increased.

Explanatory writing task--writing #2

number of 'problems' or 'crisis' have been defined by our society:

the pollution problem	the urban crisis
the ecological crisis	the population crisis
the race problem	the welfare problem
the poverty problem	the illiteracy crisis
the crime problem	the old-age problem
the medical-care problem	the youth problem

The way in which the problem has conventionally been defined determines how we will try to solve that problem. Most of our social problems need to be redefined since, if the conventional definitions of the problems were correct, most of these problems would have been solved or would be well on the way to solution.

Select any problem (such as one of those listed above) or one of your own and question the conventional definition, then redefine the problem, and consider the range of solutions that such a redefinition would yield. Write a two-page essay.

Persuasive: The focus is on the reader, not on the information, nor on the writer. The purpose of the writing is to evoke an emotion or conviction from the reader, who is seen as someone whose behavior, attitudes, or opinions differ from the writer's. Using various strategies or arguments, the writer tries to overcome the reader's resistance and win him or her over. There were two topics for writing #3 and subjects were allowed to select either topic.

Persuasive writing task--writing #3

Topic A

American schools are more interested in moral persuasion than in teaching students to think. This is the greatest sin of American public education. It would rather have children parrot current moral attitudes, which are supposed to add up to good citizenship, than to teach them how to think for themselves, by using the evidence of their senses as a starting point, and then analyzing the problem from different perspectives. The moralistic formulas may change; they may embrace progressive views, conservative views, the right, the left, or pluralism, but the indoctrinational methods of training "good citizens" remain the same.

In a two-page essay argue for or against the ideas in the above quotation.

Topic B

Women's language is that pleasant (dainty?) euphemistic, never-aggressive way of talking women learned as little girls. Cultural bias was built into the language they were allowed to speak, the subjects they were allowed to speak about, and the ways they were spoken of. Having learned their linguistic lesson well, women go out in the world, only to discover that they are communicative cripples--damned if they do, and damned if they don't.

In a two-page essay argue for or against the ideas in the above quotation.

Fourth Task: As a fourth task, subjects were given a one paragraph composition, "Ana", written by an anonymous author, and were asked to list on what basis they would revise the composition and to list the elements that they thought should be changed. In giving subjects a composition written by an anonymous author and then asking them to state on what basis they think it should be revised, the investigator reasoned that act implies theory whether one is aware of this consciously or not, and that there will be correlation between what subjects look for in their own work when they

revise, and what they look for in an objective piece of writing. Such a correlation will inform us of the writer's theory of revision.

ANA

Ana is a very mysterious young lady. Ana is from California and knows a little about everything. She lives next door to me. Ana is very smart and picks up her studies very well. Lately I have been very worried about her, because she's been cutting classes. She told her reasons why, "My teachers made me see how I was wasting time in college. All they do is knock college and tell us we're wasting money." I can't understand the attitude taken by Ana's teachers. As a result, Ana won't be returning like so many others second semester. I don't know what we can do to keep students happy at school.

Question: On what basis would you revise this composition? List those elements that you think need to be changed and give a short explanation why they should be changed.

Procedure

Subjects were given the writing tasks with the following directions: "You will have three sixty-minute sessions to work on this composition. Do whatever is natural for you when you write, but please write the composition on the paper that was given to you. And please do not erase or X-out anything that you have written. When you decide to change something, just draw a thin line through it."

Interviews

Each subject was interviewed three times. The tape-recorded interviews took place in the investigator's office at Boston Unviersity except for three adult writers who were interviewed in their homes. During the initial

interview, subjects were asked a series of background questions, theory questions, and revision questions. (See questions below.) The interviews were probing and guided and subjects were prompted to use their own language to describe their revision processes.

The following is a list of questions asked in each category and the rationale behind each category of questions.

Background Questions:

Rationale:

These questions were devised so that the investigator could learn: (1) about the writer's writing background;

(2) about the writer's external composing behaviors;

(3) begin the interview process and get the writer into a reflective mode about his/her writing behavior.

(1) Can you tell me any special experiences, teachers, or events which influenced your thinking about composition?

(2) Can you remember any specific comments your teachers made to you about your writing?

(3) How often do you write?

(4) What kind of writing do you do? What motivates you to write?

(5) What is the most difficult thing for you in writing? What problems do you have when writing?

(6) Do you experience any writing blocks? Can you describe them?

(7) What do you worry about when you write?

(8) What is the easiest thing for you in writing?

(9) What kinds of things help you get started?

(10) What is an easy subject for you to write on? What is a difficult subject:

(11) Do you have any special habits or idyosyncrasies when you write?

(12) What is an ideal writing situation for you?

(13) What writing situations do you remember most?

Theory Questions

Rationale:

These questions were devised so that the investigator could determine:

(1) the writer's composing process and

(2) what theory a writer has of written language and to what extent that theory influences the writing that the writer produces; thus allowing a comparison of

(3) the information from the interviews with the written products in order to see the relation between theory and practice.

(1) Describe what is good writing to you?

(2) Describe what is bad writing to you? What distinguishes good writing from bad writing for you? What characteristics, what elements?

(3) Who are some of the writers whose writing you like? What is it about their writing that you like? Have you ever imagined how a professional writer writes? How do you think the writer writes? What is his/her process?

(4) Do you ever think of who will read your writing? Who is your reader? How does a reader affect your process?

(5) The term, the writing process, does it mean anything to you? Do you think of your writing as a process?

(6) What is your usual writing process? How does the process of this research study compare or contrast to your usual process? Does this process seem artificial or natural to you?

Revision Questions

Rationale:

These questions were devised so that the investigator could learn:

(1) the relation between the term the writer uses to describe his/her revisions and the type of changes made;

(2) the role revision plays in the composing process of the writer; and

(3) the strategies the writer uses during the revision process.

(1) What word do you use to describe the type of changes you make? What does this word mean to you?*

(2) What do the words revision or rewriting mean to you?

(3) Can you remember any instruction you received in revision? How was it taught to you?

(4) Do you have a particular revising method? How do you evaluate your writing? How do you decide which parts to keep and which to throw away?

(5) How do you become aware of the need to change something in various drafts?

(6) What cues tell you that you need to revise?

(7) Do you read your writing aloud when you revise?

(8) Did you know what you wanted to say before you began writing? Did you discover anything new while writing? Anything new while revising?

(9) Is your attitude different during the writing of the final draft than the writing of a first draft?

(10) Do you use the same standard of judgment when you revise the first draft as when you revise the second draft?

(11) How does the time between drafts influence you? How would it be to write another draft now, or in two weeks from now? What would be easier with time? What would be harder?

*Throughout the interviews the investigator used the language of the subject. If the subject did not use the word revision, but rather used the term making changes, then the term making changes was used when questions about revision were asked.

Before each interview, the investigator marked every change made by a subject when revising (except spelling and punctuation changes) and subjects were asked specific questions about those changes and the cues which motivated the change. For instance:

Question: You added the phrase, "The family growth control" to the last paragraph in your second draft. Why?

Answer: Because I wanted to begin that paragraph with the same words that I ended the previous paragraph with.

Question: What was the cue that told you to make that change?

Answer: I realized that there was a gap and a need for a transition between paragraphs and I taught myself this trick to give my writing unity.

Questions were predefined as little as possible to allow the investigator to ask specific questions for each subject. The following account is typical of the nature of the probing:

Question: What did you worry about when you were writing this piece?

Answer: I saw all these kids writing notes and pages of ideas and I thought, "wow, they really must be thinking this through." But I couldn't think through something for so long--it wouldn't make sense to me if I thought about anything for too long. If I examine something for too long then I lose perspective.

Question: Why do you assume that these other kids think about it too long? Maybe they take their ideas just to the point where they gain perspective?

Answer: I just don't think that I could do that and anyway I hate making notes and outlines.

Question: Why? What do you think would happen if you made notes to yourself before writing?

Answer: What do I think will happen? Well, my paragraphs won't be coherent. And it will take much more work. Outlines are always hard to fit in. I am always afraid of writing an incoherent piece.

Question: But most people write outlines or make notes because they are afraid that if they don't, then their writing will be incoherent.

Answer: Yeah, but I don't like that kind of writing that people who use outlines produce. I am basically a very unorganized person, I have been told that by many people especially from my father. I won't do an outline. I depend on inspiration like Fitzgerald did.

Analysis of Data

There are three primary sources of data for each subject: (1) three written products in draft and final form; (2) the transcripts from three interviews; and (3) the suggestions for revision of the "Ana" passage.

Analyzing the written products

The investigator analyzed the level of changes which occurred from draft to draft. Each time a word, phrase, sentence, or thema was changed in any way it was noted on the written draft. Then each change was categorized and counted.

Four revision operations were identified: deletion, substitution, addition, and reordering. Four levels of changes were identified: word, phrase, sentence, and thema. (Thema is defined here as an extended statement of one idea.) A coding system was developed in order to analyze the frequency of revision by level and by operation. Table 4 explains the coding system and gives examples for each operation and level of change.

TABLE 4

REVISION CODING SYSTEM

Operation	Level	Code	Example-Draft 1	Draft 2
Deletion	word	Del_w	She is a nice woman.	She is a woman
Deletion	phrase	Del_p	She is a real salt-of the earth woman	She is a real woman.
Deletion	sentence	Del_s	She is a nice woman. She lives near me. She is very skilled.	She is a nice woman. She is very skilled.
Deletion	thema	Del_t	She is a nice woman. She is very skilled.	----------
Substitution	word	Sub_w	She is a nice woman.	She is a good woman.
Substitution	phrase	Sub_p	She is a real salt-of the earth woman.	She is a real earth-mother woman.
Substitution	sentence	Sub_s	She is very skilled in the most uncommon ways.	She is very talented in many unusual ways.
Substitution	thema	*null-category; themas do not have same meaning and cannot be substituted within the terms of this coding system.		
Addition	word	Add_w	She is a good woman.	She is a good intelligent woman.
Addition	phrase	Add_p	She is a good woman.	She is a good, almost unbelievably good woman.
Addition	sentence	Add_s	She is a good woman. I have known her for many years.	She is a good woman. I have known her for many years. She has the respect of the entire communi

Operation	Level	Code	Example-Draft 1	Draft 2
Addition	thema	Add_t	----------	I have often wondered what standards of excellence talented people demand from themselves.
Reordering	word	Re_w	She is a good intelligent woman.	She is an intelligent good woman.
Reordering	phrase	Re_p	An almost unbelievably good woman she is.	She is an almost unbelievably good woman.
Reordering	sentence	Re_s	I have known her many years. She has the respect of the community.	She has the respect of the community. I have known her many years.
Reordering	thema	Re_t	She is a good woman. I have known her for many years. I have often wondered what standards of excellence talented people demand from themselves.	I have often wondered what standards of excellence talented peopl demand from themselves. She is a good woman. I have known her for many years.

From this coding system the following information can be determined:

(1) Which operations the writer uses.

(2) What level of change the writer makes.

(3) The frequency of revision by level and by operation.

(4) The pattern of change the writer makes.

Analyzing the transcripts of the interviews

The investigator analyzed the transcripts of the interviews by looking at the writers' interpretation of their revisions. The investigator developed a scale of concerns for each writer. In developing this scale, the investigator asked:

(1) What were the writers' primary concerns when revising? Secondary concerns? etc.

(2) Do the writers use the same scale of concerns when revising $Draft_1$ as they use to revise $Draft_2$?

(3) What language do the writers use to describe their concerns when revising?

The transcripts from most of the subjects were lengthy and discursive and the investigator decided to group the responses under four of the broad questions which guided the study. In attempting to answer these broad questions, the following sub-questions were asked:

(1) What is the writer's operational definition of revision?

  (a) What word does the writer use?

  (b) What does the writer mean when he uses that word?

  (c) How does the writer describe his revision process?

  (d) How many drafts does the writer write?

(2) What role does revision play in the composing process of the writer?

  (a) Does the writer revise extensively or not?

  (b) What is the writer's attitude toward revision?

  (c) Does the writer make changes of all types? Is there a pattern to the type of changes the writer makes?

(3) What cues tell the writer to revise?

(a) What are the cues--lexical, syntactical, semantic, which tell a writer that he needs to revise?

(b) What does the cue signal to the writer?

(c) Is the writer sensitive to cues on all levels?

(4) What is the writer's theory of the revision process?

(a) What was the writer aiming for when he revised?

(b) Is there a match between the writer's definition of good writing or bad writing and the qualities he aims for when revising? How does the writer square theory with practice?

(c) Does the writer have a wide range of revision strategies? How does the writer explain this range?

(d) Does the writer use all four operations of the revision process? Does he use one operation more than others or equally use them all?

(e) Is there a sequence to the changes made? Does the writer use the same standard of judgment for each draft? Is the writer's focus of attention different during the revision of draft 1 than during the revision of draft 2?

(f) How does the writer decide to stop revising?

Analyzing the "Ana" Passage

The "Ana" passage was designed to offer a wide variety of revision interpretations; it could be revised on the lexical, syntactical, contextual, or rhetorical levels. The passage was used as a reliability instrument to add additional information about the writer's theory and practice of the revision practice. The investigator hypothesized that theory implies practice as practice implies theory and matched the writer's response and his explanation of his response to the "Ana" passage against the writer's revision strategies and reasons for revising.

CHAPTER III

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview

In this chapter the case studies of two student writers and two experienced writers will be presented. Summary sections of the case studies of the six other student writers and five other experienced writers will be presented also in order to understand the similarities within the groups and the differences between the groups.

Originally the researcher intended to write individual case studies for each subject. After analyzing the data, however, the researcher noticed such consistent similarities within the groups that it was considered redundant and inefficient to present each individual case study. Therefore, two case studies from each group were selected as prototypes and are presented here as profiles. These prototypes represent the entire range of characteristics for their group and adequately detail the commonalities and differences for their group.

An additional reason for selecting these particular subjects whose profiles are presented here was that these subjects in the interviews provided more information about their writing. The interviews were difficult situations for many subjects and the nature of the study demanded that subjects discuss and interpret their own practice in the interviews. Some subjects did not provide very complete information.

This situation was especially pronounced with the student writers. Although the student writers willingly agreed to participate in the study and were informed in advance about the nature of the interviews, there was a great variance in the degree of participation. It was a new and uncomfortable position for many students to be asked about their writing process and they were often very reluctant to be introspective. The most frequent response was, "I don't know." Although the researcher recognized this response as a legitimate answer, she nevertheless attempted to probe the response and prod the subject to answer further questions. Usually the probing was not successful and was met with an even more recalcitrant, "I don't know." The student writers whose profiles are presented in this chapter were more reflective during the interviews and generally more comfortable talking about their composing process.

Subjects were asked to compose in three modes: expressive, explanatory, persuasive. The control for mode was an essential part of the research design since discourse theorists claim that a writer thinks and plans in different ways for different modes of writing (Kinneavy, 1967; Britton, 1975). The researcher questioned whether this difference would show in the revision process by asking: would revision strategies differ across the modes and if so what kind of revisions could be predicted? Or would revision strategies hold consistent within the three modes?

In analyzing the data, the researcher observed no notable differences across the modes. Approximately the same number, same operation, and same type of changes were made for each mode. For example, the student writers made a total of 143 deletions. Of these 143 deletions, 37% were made in the expressive mode, 29% in the explanatory and 34% in the persuasive mode. Similarly, the experienced writers made a total of 636 deletions. Of these 636 deletions, 33% were made in the expressive mode, 38% in the explanatory, and 29% in the persuasive mode. Moreover, the reasons the subjects gave for making these changes and the cues that told them to make the changes did not vary across the modes. The subjects brought a consistent set of assumptions to each writing task and thus, since there was such stability across modes, in this discussion the modes will be merged.

PROFILE OF A STUDENT WRITER: DANIEL

Background

Daniel is an articulate mature freshman who is interested in writing and wants to be a journalist. He graduated from a Jesuit High School in Miami, Florida, and feels very proud of the rigorous training he received. He described his high school English class as "constant exercise in writing," but points to his government class as the place where he feels he received his best instruction in writing. Daniel, who enjoys writing, keeps a daily journal in which he writes about his interactions with people and his frustrations with life. He feels that he can release a lot of tension through writing and that he can express himself better in writing than in speaking. Daniel's conceptualization of the difference between writing and composing is that writing is "just thoughts, ramblings, conversations with myself," whereas "composing needs an introduction, a body, and a conclusion." Daniel is very conscious of adhering to this structural definition of composing and every composition that he writes has a clearly defined introduction which includes a thesis statement, a body that defines the subject, and a conclusion that is an "allworldly summarizing statement."

Operational Definition of Revision

Daniel never uses the words revision or rewriting, but calls these activities slashing and throwing out. By slashing and throwing out Daniel means, "Throwing things out

and saying they are not good. If I know my subject really quickly, then I get inspired, but if I don't know it, then I write five or six introductory sentences and say, 'Well, none of these are really what I want to say.'"

Daniel spent the three hours which were given to him to write and revise each composition in a very consistent way.

Day_1----------Selecting a subject and writing an introductory paragraph

Day_2----------Writing complete draft

Day_3----------Revising draft and recopying revised draft

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Daniel made a total of 56 changes for the three compositions he revised. He made 19 changes for the expressive composition, 17 changes for the explanatory composition, and 20 changes for the persuasive composition. Table 5 presents the frequency of revision by level and by operation.

TABLE 5

Frequency of Revision: Student Writer Daniel

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	11	11	2	0	24
Phrase	4	5	0	0	9
Sentence	10	3	3	0	16
Thema	7	0	0	0	7
Total	32	19	5	0	56

Characterization of Revisions

Table 6 presents a representative sampling of the type of changes Daniel made. Listed in the table are: (1) the change made; (2) the place in the composition where the change was made; (3) the cue that told Daniel to make the change; and (4) the extended reason Daniel gave for making the change.

TABLE 6

Characterization of Revision: Daniel

Deletion

Word Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
much	1st paragraph, 2d sent. Explanatory	the word "much"	I was looking for words to cut out. I know I need to cut out words since I am so wordy and I knew that "much" was too much.
but	1st paragraph, 3d sent. Expressive	the word "but"	I know that it is improper to begin a sentence with a conjunction and so I always remove conjunctions like "but" from the beginning of sentences.
really	1st paragraph, 5th sent. Expressive	sounded exaggerated	I was pushing my point too far. I was padding my sentence with words and the words didn't do anything for the sentence.
Phrase Deletion			
more or less	1st paragraph, last sent. Explanatory	too many words	I was being repetitive and just padding my writing.
dialectical definitions	3d paragraph, 3d sent. Explanatory	got stuck on the phrase when reading	I think that I was just fooling around with words when I wrote that. I'm not sure I know what it means and if I am misusing it.

Sentence	Place	Cue	Reason Given
It is undeniable as one reflects on one's educational upbringing that in essence everything was slanted.	First Sentence Persuasive	too many words	The sentence was very weak. It totally means nothing--too vague, not forceful enough.
This in itself should be considered the problem	4th paragraph, 2d sent. Explanatory	the phrase "in itself"	I read the paragraph and I kept hearing the phrase "this in itself." I was being so repetitive so I cut out this sentence.
No one asks a child how or what he feels about what he is watching.	6th paragraph, 6th sent. Explanatory	sounded like conversation	The tone of this essay was more formal and this sentence was off the formal tone.

Thema	Place	Reason Given
Sitting in my room, or any relatively quiet place, I frequently sit and hash out all my problems with my head. It is quite amusing, even to myself. When something starts to be very serious and finishes off absurdly.	Introduction Expressive	It was too DULL--too boring. It wouldn't interest anyone but me, why write it.

Thema	Place	Reason Given
For too long we have been concerned with the failures of our youth, what we have done wrong to make them such revolutionary little creatures. The youth problem, a common scape goat of civilized societies is not really a major problem.	Introduction Explanatory	I came to the conclusion that I didn't know enough about the topic.

Substitution

Word Substitution	Place	Cue	Reason Given
a. bad temperament b. gloom c. dejection d. bad temper	3d paragraph 2d sentence Expresive	the word "temperment" was too flowery	It wasn't my style to use the word temperament and I realized that. So I went to the thesaurus and wrote the words "gloom", "dejection" and "bad temper". The first two were not really what I wanted to say so I decided on "bad temper" since there were no other choices.
a. certain b. sure	2d paragraph 2d sentence Persuasive	repetition	I used the word certain in the previous sentence and I couldn't use the same word twice in the same paragraph.
Phrase Substitution			
a. The child is human not mechanical. b. Children are human not mechanical.	6th paragraph 4th sentence Explanatory	repetition	Every sentence in the graph began with "The". I rephrased to get rid of the repetition of beginning sentences with "THE".

Sentence Substitution	Place	Cue	Reason Given
a. A simple conversation with a child about what he is doing can be educational. b. Education can begin with a simple conversation.	5th paragraph, 5th sent. Explanatory	too many words	It sounded so much like speech and too informal.

Addition

Sentence Addition	Place	Cue	Reason Given
Illiteracy then can be solved with some thought.	Final paragraph, last sentence Explanatory	a gap	This was my all worldly conclusion. If I had left it as it was there would have been questions asked, like--where is your conclusion?
A mind is a terrible thing to waste.	6th paragraph, last sentence Persuasive	a gap	Well, I had this sentence in my mind and I wanted to put it somewhere. I thought about developing it but I didn't do it. I realized that this graph needed a sentence at the end of it so I put this one there. I know it is just sort of plopped down, but at least it fills the gap.

Scale of Concerns

The following section presents Daniel's scale of concerns from most important to least important and his discussion of these concerns. For a visual outline of Daniel's scale of concerns see Table 7.

TABLE 7

Scale of Concerns: Student Writer Daniel

SCALE	CONCERNS
Concern 1	Forcefully worded opening sentence Forcefully worded introductory paragraph
Concern 2	Avoiding repetition
Concern 3	Observing rules for composing
Concern 4	Removing obstacles for a reader
Concern 5	Checking wording of individual sentences

Concern 1 Forcefully worded opening sentence
Forcefully worded introductory paragraph

Daniel's primary concerns are with the wording of his opening sentence and his introductory paragraph. Daniel sees the opening sentence and the entire introduction as the determiners of success or failure for his composition. He defines good writing as "writing that captures my interest from the very beginning from the first sentence." Daniel feels that the first paragraph is the most important paragraph in the composition since that is what interests his reader and if he puts anything in the first paragraph that is boring or dull then his reader will not go beyond the first paragraph.

Daniel spent Day_1 for all three compositions working on the first paragraph. Daniel used the word inspiration to discuss his method of revising his first paragraph. When he feels inspired, then the introductory paragraph is written quickly and doesn't demand any major changes. When he does not feel "inspired", however, as was the case for the first two compositions, he slashes out different sentences and themes.

Concern 2 Avoiding Repetition

The most frequent cue which tells Daniel to revise is the awareness of lexical repetition and lexically-formulated syntactical repetition. Daniel explained: "When I am writing my composition, words just come to me, but when I go back to read what I have written, I hear the same words and the same phrases over and over again, and it really bothers me." Lexical repetition is easily solved by the aid of a thesaurus, and Daniel's method is to use a thesaurus as a supplier of synonyms.

When Daniel recognizes the intensity of his lexical repetition, he has the lingering sense that "there is something much larger that is wrong." Daniel does not know what to do about semantic repetition or how to revise to avoid any repetition except lexical repetition, so he does what he knows how to do by substitution and deletion.

Concern 3 Observing Rules for Composing

Daniel sees the revision process as a rule-governed behavior. He remembers the comments and corrections from his high school English teachers as a series of prescriptive rules always stated as negative propositions. "I've always been told 'don't do this and don't do that' and my head is so clogged up with what not to do and all I can remember is what not to do." These rules create a series of stylistic principles for Daniel which he consistently applies for every composition as the basis of his revision strategies.

The following list gives the three rules which Daniel consistently observes and his explanation:

Rule 1 Never begin a sentence with a conjunction

"I was told in high school that to start a sentence with the word but is improper even though it is allowed. It is improper because it is insulting to the reader since it is incorrect grammar. I would have loved to keep all the buts at the beginning of sentences. I think the writing flows better with them, but I know it is wrong."

Rule 2 Never use speech-like phrases as fillers

"I was taught by my high school teacher to kill the padding, the speech-like phrases in writing. I love putting stuff in my sentences, like I love putting in the phrase for example. My teachers tell me to get rid of those kind of phrases because they are only padding and too conversational. But when I am talking to myself that is how I talk so I put it into my writing."

Rule 3 Never misuse vocabulary

"I really worry that I misuse vocabulary, and I know it is wrong. Sometimes I just write these humongous words to impress myself, but when I read them over, I worry that I am just fooling around with words. I hate to read other people's papers when there are words which I can't understand, and I know it is wrong to use words which you don't understand or your reader doesn't understand."

Concern 4 Removing Obstacles for a Reader

Daniel is very conscious of removing any obstacles which might prevent a reader from understanding what he has written. He talked a lot during the interviews about what he felt "annoyed" a reader. He said during all three interviews, "If I am reading my writing and I get stuck on a word or a phrase, well, I know a reader will probably get stuck and will be annoyed. Sometimes I read my sentences, and they are so slow moving because there are too many words in them. If I have a hard time getting through that kind of sentence, then I know that a reader will, and I don't want any hurdles for the reader."

Concern 5 Checking Wording of Individual Sentences

Daniel's final concern before checking the grammar and spelling is to check the wording of individual sentences. His method is to read his composition sentence by sentence and decide after each sentence if it is worded correctly. His attention is focused upon words and phrases, and he again checks for repetition and any violation of the rules of composing.

Daniel's Strategies for Revising the "Ana" Passage

There was a striking correlation between Daniel's revision of the one paragraph composition, "Ana" and his own scale of concerns. In the "Ana" paragraph there are several revision possibilities which could have been discussed, but Daniel examined only lexical and syntactical concerns. Daniel listed the following six points which he thought needed to be changed in the "Ana" paragraph.

(1) The first sentence is very dull and uninteresting.

(2) The use of contractions in formal writing is usually annoying and doesn't contribute much to the thrust of what is being said.

(3) Short choppy sentences do not offer any sense of flow to this composition.

(4) There is too much repetition of the pronoun she.

(5) The quotations from Ana are not properly set apart to indicate that they are truly Ana's words.

(6) There is no indication because of the choppy nature of the composition whether these words are really the best words to fully describe Ana.

Daniel's analysis of the "Ana" paragraph is that the author violated what Daniel considers to be the cardinal rules for composing. He is very attuned to overt form and was more concerned with how the paragraph was written than what it said. As with Daniel's scale of concerns for his own writing, he believes that a reader wants an interesting first sentence and will be annoyed by repetition. He is very aware of a reader who expects a polished surface structure, who will be prejudiced against the writing by any abuse of textbook conventions, and who will understand the writing because of the surface level correctness.

Conclusions:

What role does revision play in Daniel's composing process?

Daniel's revision process is a function of the level of his inspiration. When Daniel feels inspired then the composition does not demand any major changes, but when the writing doesn't "flow from pen to paper" then he is forced to slash and throw out. This graphic definition of revision as a slashing and throwing out process is expressed by the dramatic slashes that mark the abandoned introductory sentences for all three compositions.

Daniel sees inspiration as a process antithetical to planning or plotting an outline and depends upon inspiration as his primary composing method. He believes that professional writers write by inspiration and likes to identify himself with the conventional image of the professional writer sitting at the typewriter and creating a manuscript as he types.

Daniel's preoccupation with writing an introduction even before he knows what idea he wants to introduce has a strong influence upon what ideas he decides to write about. Daniel feels that he must know ahead of time what he wants to say and forces himself to generate all the ideas that will be in his composition in his introduction. He believes that a reader wants a powerful and interesting introduction, one that is perfectly polished, and he feels that this polishing must be accomplished as the introduction is first conceived and before the rest of the composition is written.

What is Daniel's theory of the revision process?

As Daniel's definition of revision as an activity of "slashing and throwing out" suggests and as Table 5 points out, Daniel primarily sees the revision process as an activity of throwing things out of his writing. Deletion is the major revision operation, accounting for 57% of the changes made and substitution is the next important revision operation accounting for 34% of the changes. Addition is a very minor operation and reordering is an operation which Daniel does not even use when revising. He does not see revision as a process of adding new material or new ideas which have been discovered in the process of writing. His strategy is to reword sentences but to keep the original meaning intact.

Daniel sees revision in terms of a check-list of rules. A violation of these prescribed rules is the cue that tells Daniel that there is a lack of congruency between what his composition does and what it should do to be conventionally correct. These cues serve as flags or signals to create sufficient dissonance to motivate Daniel to revise. Dissonance is created by the awareness that something is wrong and Daniel revises his composition according to a consistently narrow range of "rules" which are conventionally correct.

Daniel decides to stop revising when he has decided that he has not violated any of the rules for revising and consequently has met his revision criteria. He does

not see the necessity of writing many drafts because he does not know how to change anything more than what he does change. He feels if he would really make large changes then he would have to turn a two page paper into a twenty page paper.

PROFILE OF A STUDENT WRITER: MICHAEL

Background

Michael, a freshman management student, describes himself as a "pragmatist, not an idealist, interested in banking and in the business world." Michael worked 20-25 hours every week during high school and had no time for reading or writing outside school. During his senior year in high school, Michael wrote only five compositions and read only three books. He was happy to be finally taking a composition course since he knew that "written communications are so important for someone who wants to make it in the business world." Michael was such an enthusiastic subject that he brought his taperecorder to each interview to have a permanent recording of his answers and thoughts about writing.

Operational Definition of Revision

Michael uses the word proofreading to describe his revision process. By proofreading, Michael means: "Rewording, circling things that might need to be changed, and inserting commas. I usually proofread my composition three times and each time I look for a different thing. First I go through and check the organization of my outline. Then I go through and change words around. Then, after I like the wording, I go through and see that everything agrees with everything else, and I look at the grammar and check for capital letters and commas."

Michael spent the three hours which were given to him to write and revise each composition in a very consistent way.

Day_1----------Writing an outline

Day_2----------Revising outline and writing rough draft from outline

Day_3----------Revising rough draft

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Michael made a total of 52 changes for the three compositions he revised. He made 15 changes for the expressive composition, 18 changes for the explanatory composition, and 19 changes for the persuasive composition. Table 8 presents the frequency of revision by level and by operation.

TABLE 8

Frequency of Revision: Student Writer Michael

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	3	13	3	0	19
Phrase	5	10	1	1	17
Sentence	10	4	2	0	16
Thema	0	0	0	0	0
Total	18	27	6	1	52

Characterization of Revisions

Table 9 presents a representative sampling of the type of changes Michael made. Listed in the table are: (1) the change made; (2) the place in the composition

where the change was made; (3) the cue that told Michael to make the change; and (4) the extended reason Michael gave for making the change.

TABLE 9

Characterization of Revisions: Michael

Word Deletion	Place	Deletion Cue	Reason Given
strongly	Last paragraph Second sentence Expressive	the word strongly	I didn't want to seem too definite and exaggerate my point of view.
Phrase Deletion			
textbooks and school policies	Third paragraph First sentence Persuasive	the word school	I used the word school twice in the same sentence. I had to decide which place in the sentence to keep the word and I decided it was more important to keep the phrase school teachers so I dropped school policies.
moral persuasion	Outline Introduction Persuasive	the phrase moral persuasion	I realized that I was repeating the same words from the assignment in my first sentence of my introduction. I was marked down for doing that last time so I decided I better not do it again.

Sentence Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
Most states have state operated colleges which offer low-cost education to all.	Outline Introduction Explanatory	My thesis statement	I read through my introduction and I don't know what it was but I started to get the feeling that I was going off into a different direction from what my thesis statement said. There were too many words in the sentence and they weren't saying anything significant.
I feel that an individual is more dignified to keep partially concealed.	4th paragraph 3d sentence Expressive	wording of the sentence	The way I wrote it, it is a rather strong sentence. A lot of people would argue with it. I don't want to be controversial. I am apt to offend or insult someone.

Substitution

Word Substitution			
a. schooling b. education	Outline Introduction Persuasive	the word school	I used the word school twice in the same sentence. Anyway, I wanted a better word and the word education sounds better.
a. quote which states b. quote which implies	First paragraph 2d sentence Expressive	the word states	The word states is too strong of a word. I didn't want to come across so positive and specific. I didn't want to be too absolute since I didn't want anyone to disagree with me. Nobody will disagree with me if I use the word implies.

Phrase Substitution	Place	Cue	Reason Given
a. to think that they can get away with crime	Outline Part 3 Explanatory	too many words	It sounded so childish with all those words. It sounded like the way I wrote in 3d grade. I knew I could find better words.
b. to think that crime is permissable			
c. to lead an inconspicuous lifestyle	3d paragraph 5th sentence Expressive	the word lifestyle	I used the word lifestyle too many times in the same paragraph and I thought that I sounded awfully repetitive.
d. to keep a low profile			
Sentence Substitution			
a. Traditionally it has been assumed that juvenile crime is due to a lack of opportunity.	Second paragraph First sent. Explanatory	the phrase Traditionally it has been assumed	There were too many words in the sentence. I didn't like the wording because it sounded too vague. I wanted to show that society believed it, not just me.
b. A large segment of society has traditionally believed that juvenile crime is caused by a lack of opportunity.			

Addition

Word Added	Place	Cue	Reason Given
however	Introduction 3d sentence Persuasive	a crack	I like the word however. I use it wherever I think there are cracks in the sentences. I think it makes it sound more like an argument.
Phrase Added quality academic education	Last paragraph First sentence Persuasive	Something missing	I read the paragraph and I saw that I needed to be more specific. I needed a better transition to fill in what kind of education I was referring to. I wanted to specify that I meant quality academic education.
Sentence Added The truth of these ideas are, of course, open for debate.	Last paragraph First sentence Explanatory	didn't flow	I read the previous paragraph and then this paragraph and I realized that there wasn't a transition from paragraph to paragraph. I think this sentence makes a smooth transition.

Reordering

Phrase Reordered a. I always place school obligations near the top of my list of priorities and am always occupied with homework.	6th paragraph 2d sentence Expressive	wording of the sentence	I read the sentence and something bothered me about the way it was worded. I decided it wasn't very efficient the way it was worded and that the emphasis was wrong.

b. I am always occupied with homework and I always place school obligations near the top of my list of priorities.

Scale of Concerns

The following section presents Michael's degree of concerns from what he considers most important to least important and his discussion of these concerns. For a visual outline of Michael's scale of concerns see Table 10.

TABLE 10

Scale of Concerns: Student Writer Michael

SCALE	CONCERNS
Concern 1	Reshaping outline
Concern 2	Making writing more indefinite
Concern 3	Making writing more appropriate
Concern 4	Checking for smooth transitions

Concern 1 Reshaping Outline

Michael spent Day_1 and Day_2 for all three compositions writing and revising his outline. Michael always prepared an outline before he writes anything, even a letter; he never begins to write a full draft until he is satisfied with his outline. His outlines are always very formal, very detailed, complete with roman numerals and standard structure of an introduction, a body, and a conclusion. His introductions always contain a thesis statement as either the ultimate or penultimate sentence. Michael writes the introductory section of his outline in full sentences and

feels that introductions are the easiest part of the outline since he always knows what he wants to say and can write them first.

Michael sees his outline as the determiner of success or failure for his composition. He defines good writing as "writing that is well organized and tightly structured," and his greatest worry is that his writing will not be well organized. Michael explained: "I depend on my outline to give structure to my writing. I know if my writing is not good then it is because my outline wasn't good. I am afraid that I will go off my subject if I don't use an outline and then my writing will not be organized. I am afraid also that I won't finish my writing if I don't use an outline because it takes me a lot longer and it is a lot harder for me without an outline. All I have to do is write the outline then reshape the outline and put all the sentences and points from the outline into a composition."

Concern 2 Making Writing More Indefinite

In the writing of all three compositions, Michael's strategy was one of mitigation, of reducing the force and strength of his language. He explained: "I am a cautious person. I prefer to beat around the bush on debatable issues. I rarely make definite statements in writing: that something definitely is, or is not, or always is, I strike those words out of my writing. Too many people could disagree." Michael's strategy is either to delete any controversial words or sentences or to substitute a more indefinite word or phrase.

Michael's preference to make his writing more indefinite influences not only his choice of words, but also his choice of subject matter. "I would never tackle an emotional or political problem like abortion or women's liberation in writing. I am apt to insult or offend someone. anyway, I know that if a teacher disagrees with my ideas, face it, I'll be marked down for it.

Concern 3 Making Writing More Appropriate

The words appropriate and inappropriate are code words for Michael describing a network of associations which refer to his reader's expectations and biases. Michael explained: "I go through looking for words that are not appropriate. If a word is too childish or if I have repeated the same word twice in the same sentence then I reword the sentence to make it more appropriate." To Michael the opposite of a childish vocabulary is a sophisticated vocabulary. Michael's strategy is to use a thesaurus to improve the "sophistication" and thus the appropriateness of his writing by substituting words or phrases which sound more mature to him.

Concern 4 Checking for Smooth Transitions

Michael's final concern before checking his grammar and punctuation is to check his composition for smooth transitions. Addition is a minor operation for Michael; when he adds words or sentences to his composition it is simply

because he recognizes the need for a smooth transition. He explained: "I know that a paragraph must flow and not stop abruptly. I have often been criticized by teachers for not having smooth transitions from paragraph to paragraph. I know that I need something to connect, a transition, some kind of gum to stick between the cracks as filler. I have a stock pile of filler words, like the words however and for example, and some sentences that I use for such situations."

Michael's Strategies for Revising the "Ana" Passage

In listing those elements which he thought needed to be changed in the "Ana" paragraph, Michael cited the following reasons in outline form.

I. This composition needs to be overhauled.
   A. A thesis sentence is needed and could be created by combining the first two or three sentences.
   B. The sentences are too choppy and short.
   C. The composition is worded in a childish style. More sophistication in vocabulary and style would be appropriate.
   D. There is too much repetition of quotes in the paragraph.
   E. The jump from second person to first person form of a narrator is difficult to understand and not appropriate.

Michael's analysis of the "Ana" paragraph is that the author violated what Michael believes to be the appropriate rules for composing. As with his own scale of concerns for his own writing, Michael believes that a reader expects

conventional correctness and finds the absence of a thesis statement inappropriate. Michael believes that the quality of the "Ana" paragraph and of his own writing will be judged more by the presence or absence of a thesis statement than by the development of ideas that follows that thesis statement. Michael's attention is directed towards surface level improvements and his suggestions for revising the "Ana" paragraph are consonant with his emphasis when revising upon appropriate vocabulary and style.

Conclusions:

What role does revision play in Michael's composing process?

Michael views "proofreading" as a minor activity in his composing process and outlining as the major activity. While discussing his writing, he constantly referred to his outlines and preferred not to talk about "proofreading problems" but rather outlining problems. Although Michael abandons his outline after he has written a first draft, he feels that any difficulties in his first or second drafts can be traced back to a faulty outline.

Outlining is a safe and secure method of composing for Michael and even though he recognizes that his writing often has a predictable and uneventful quality, he continues to outline. Michael believes that writers must write knowing exactly what they want to say and he does not believe it is possible to discover something new while involved in the act of writing.

What is Michael's Theory of the revision process?

Substitution, accounting for 52% of the changes made, is Michael's major revision operation and the heaviest concentraiton of substitutions was on the word and phrase level. Michael remembers an English teacher who once told him, "if you can't solve the problem in the sentence, then reword it." Michael has taken this prescriptive advice very literally and his major strategy is to reword his sentences by substitution. Deletion, the next important revision operation, accounts for 35% of changes made, addition for 12%, and reordering for 1% of the changes made.

The most significant revision cues for Michael are lexical repetition, inappropriate vocabulary, and abuse of the rules for composing. His focus is directed towards lexical items and he successfully revises to avoid lexical repetition, but has no mechanism to catch semantic repetition.

Michael's awareness of the existence of a reader influences his revision process. He represents a reader with a strong political point of view and he makes definite choices not to antagonize a reader, but rather to be diplomatic and to please a reader with his moderate prose.

Michael's revision process is a function of how "perfect" he thinks his outline is. If he writes a perfect outline, then he feels as if it is pointless for him to change words or sentences when he knows that "something larger is wrong." This awareness that "something larger is

wrong" was expressed during all three interviews. Michael conceded, however, that even though he knew something was wrong, he knew that the composition was adequate without any more changes and would probably receive a B or C grade which was good enough for him since English wasn't his major."

THE EIGHT STUDENT WRITERS: A SYNTHESIS

In this section the case studies of Daniel and Michael are compared with the case studies of the six other students writers. The purpose of this comparison is to point out the commonalities and differences within the group, to construct a synthesis of the group, and to develop a set of conclusions about the revision process of these eight students. This section will be divided into seven sub-sections: (1) Background, (2) Generalizations about the Composing Process, (3) Operational Definitions of Revision, (4) Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation, (5) Scale of Concerns. (6) Theory of the Revision Process, and (7) Conclusions.

Background

Seven of the students felt inadequately prepared and highly critical of their high school teachers who either demanded very little writing from them or gave them instruction only in the form of grades and red-penciled comments. Daniel was the only student who felt as if his rigorous training in high school adequately prepared him for a college composition course. Stephen, a graduate of an alternative high school, reported that during his senior year in high school he wrote only poetry, and that during his four years of high school he never received any formal instruction in

writing or grammar. Jeremy described his lack of training this way: "We always had teachers who were very relaxed and who demanded very little from us. I had a reputation as a good guitar player and so I gave concerts for my junior and senior English projects." When asked about any instruction they had received in revision, none of the students could remember receiving any instruction except Jonathan, who remembered that his teachers always told him to check his language and to proofread his papers before handing them in.

From their comments in the interviews, these students do very little writing and reading besides what is assigned in school. Daniel and Jeremy keep journals, but the other students reported a lack of time or desire to do any writing besides that is assigned in school. When asked about reading preferences, Aaron said, "I like the classics, you know, Hesse and Vonnegut," and the other students seemed to agree with him. Daniel and Ben are the only students who read a newspaper on a daily basis, but the other six students read People, Time, or Newsweek regularly.

Generalizations about the Composing Process

When asked to describe their typical composing process, all of the students gave variations of Jeremy's response, "Process? I don't think of writing as a process, it's just something that happens." This idea that composing is "just something that happens" seems to be closely related to the idea of "writing as inspiration." With the exception

of Michael, all of the students frequently use the word inspiration as a code word to describe their network of associations about their writing habits. Inspiration relates to the ease or difficulty with which a composition is written, and more importantly, explains the logic behind the organizational pattern of the composition and the extent to which a composition needs to be revised. If a student feels inspired then the writing seems to hum along, ideas are written down as they come, and there is very little need to change what has been written in a first draft.

Although their methods differ, the theory behind these methods are very similar and two related generalizations about the composing process link Michael's dependence upon outlining with the other seven students' dependence upon "inspiration."

(1) The students see writing as a very linear process in which a writer gets an idea, or the idea comes to the writer, and then writes the idea down in the order in which the ideas occurred to the writer. The students assume that they must know before writing what they want to say and do not see the process of composing as a heuristic or exploratory process.

(2) The students have a very high need for a safe and secure composing method and use their same method in a consistently predictable way. Even when faced with a lack of inspiration or the recognition that their planning procedures

have failed them, they do not willingly experiment with other methods and are very reluctant to take risks.

Operational Definitions of Revision

Like Daniel and Michael, the other six student writers do not use the word revision, nor do they use the word rewriting, but rather have developed a functional term to describe the type of changes they make. The following is a brief description of how these six student writers define their revision processes:

Aaron: "I say Scratch out and Do over, and that means what it says. Scratching out and cutting out. I read what I have written and I cross out a word and put another word in; a more decent word or a better word. Then if there is somewhere to use a sentence that I have crossed out, I will put it there."

Ben: "Reviewing means just using better words and eliminating words that are not needed. I go over and change words around."

Edward: "Marking out a word and Putting a different one in. I don't use the word rewriting because I only write one draft and the changes that I make are made on top of that draft. The changes that I make are usually just marking out words and putting different ones in."

Jeremy: "Redoing means cleaning up the paper and crossing out. It is looking at something and saying, no that has to go or no, that is not right."

Jonathan: "Reviewing is just reviewing everything and making sure that everything is worded right. I see if I am rambling, I see if I can put a better word in or leave one out. Usually when I read what I have written, I say to myself, 'that word is so bland or so trite' and then I go and get my thesaurus."

Stephen: "I call it just doing it, you know, it is just part of doing it and I don't have a special word. I usually have to write it twice so I can see the words I misspelled and to see the sentences that are not sentences."

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Table 11 presents the frequency of revision by level and by operation for the other six students.

TABLE 11

Frequency of Revision: Student Writers

AARON 50 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	9	5	1	0	15
Phrase	10	12	1	0	23
Sentence	5	3	2	0	10
Thema	2	0	0	0	2
Total	26	20	4	0	50

BEN 32 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	5	8	0	0	13
Phrase	4	6	1	0	11
Sentence	2	3	2	0	7
Thema	0	0	0	1	1
Total	11	17	3	1	32

EDWARD 29 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	4	9	1	0	14
Phrase	2	6	0	0	8
Sentence	5	0	1	0	6
Thema	0	0	0	1	1
Total	11	15	2	1	29

JEREMY 35 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	5	2	3	0	10
Phrase	6	3	4	0	13
Sentence	3	0	2	1	6
Thema	2	0	3	1	6
Total	16	5	12	2	35

JONATHAN 45 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	6	9	1	1	17
Phrase	5	11	3	1	20
Sentence	3	1	2	2	8
Thema	0	0	0	0	0
Total	14	21	6	4	45

STEPHEN 34 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	5	8	2	0	15
Phrase	2	6	0	0	8
Sentence	6	2	0	0	8
Thema	2	0	0	1	3
Total	15	16	2	1	34

All eight students 333 changes

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	48	65	13	1	127
Phrase	38	59	10	3	110
Sentence	44	16	14	2	76
Thema	13	X	3	4	20
Total	143	140	40	10	333

Scale of Concerns

The common primary concern which links these eight student writers' definitions of revision is the predominant emphasis upon vocabulary. The students see the revision process as a rewording activity. Out of the 333 total changes made, 127 were single word changes, 110 were phrase changes, 76 were sentence changes, and only 20 of the changes were on the thema level. The dominant questions these students ask themselves when revising are: Can I find a better word or phrase? Am I repeating the same word or phrase too often? Can I cut out any excess words?

When questioned about this predominant emphasis upon vocabulary, the students' responses fell in two categories:

(1) In high school they had been given vocabulary lists and composition assignments as companion activities. As Ben reported: "In high school my teachers gave us a list of twenty advanced vocabulary words each week to prepare us for SAT's. We then wrote compositions and felt obliged to use those words in our compositions. I think we received higher grades when we used those words." The other students reported similar experiences with their teachers encouraging them to use a thesaurus and writing "very good" beside those words taken from a thesaurus.

(2) The students have observed the distinction between what they consider good writing and what is conventionally defined as "good writing" from an English teacher's point of view. The students do not define good writing in terms of

vocabulary, rather they point to the interest value of the content. However, they do point with some mystification to a turn of a phrase or the sophisticated vocabulary of a published essay, and ask, "Isn't that what makes this considered good writing?" Since they have only seen the published text of a writer, they conclude that writer writes a first draft with the same emphasis upon vocabulary as they do.

As Table 11 shows, 140 out of 333 changes were made by substitution and 143 by deletion. As with Daniel and Michael, lexical substitutions and deletions are the major revision activities of these students. The students describe their lexical substitutions as a search for "more impressive", "not so cliched," or "less hum-drum" vocabul a ry. All of the students, except Daniel, equate written language with a high-register vocabulary and in their attempt to make their compositions "sound" more like writing than speech, they depend upon a thesaurus as a generous bounty of lexical substitutions.

The students describe their lexical deletions as a desire not to be "so wordy" and they focus their attention upon finding words or phrases which could be counted as excessive and hence deleted. These students express much pride when they are able to make their writing "less wordy." There seems to be syllogistic reasoning operating behind the students' desire to cut our excess words: if good writing is concise writing with no extra words, then they will be concise by cutting out extra words.

Two observations can be made here about the student writers' primary emphasis upon vocabulary when revising.

(1) The students approach the revision process with what could be labeled as a "Thesaurus Philosophy of Writing." Such a philosophy contains the following beliefs:

a. A belief that for every word in the language, an exact synonym can be found as a substitution.

b. A belief that written language always demands a high-register vocabulary.

c. A belief that words are the major structural units of a composition.

d. A belief that if there is a problem in the composition that it can be solved by rewording.

(2) When students focus their attention upon lexical substitutions and deletions, their primary attention is upon vocabulary to the exclusion of content. They are dominated by their concern for <u>how</u> their composition is worded.

<u>Theory of the Revision Process</u>

There are three characteristics of these student writers' theory of revision: (1) Revision as a rule-governed behavior, (2) Revision as a check-list, and (3) Revision as an activity of making lexical changes but not semantic changes.

(1) <u>Revision as a rule-governed behavior</u>

These student writers understand the revision process as a rule-governed behavior. They believe that there is a finite set of rules for revising and that they

only need to learn a set of principles for effective writing and then apply these principles as rules. They have developed mental handbooks of rules and when they learn a new rule, this rule is entered, but not integrated into their handbooks. They show a tendency to mechanically apply the principles they have been taught without examining the logic behind them.

Reordering, for instance, which accounted for only 10 changes out of the 333 changes made, became an important operation only during the revising of the persuasive composition. The students had been taught one week prior to the writing of that composition that one strategy when organizing a persuasive composition is to save the strongest argument for last. This strategy was then appended to their handbooks of rules and five of the eight students reordered themas when revising. It is interesting, however, how mechanically this was performed. The students noted that the last paragraph that they had written in the first draft was "not very good," but rather than deleting that paragraph or adding a new one, they simply and mechanically reordered paragraphs.

(2) Revision as a check-list

These student writers see their writing on a very molecular level and evaluate their writing on a word to sentence level. They see their composition as a series of parts and do not ask what the composition as a whole needs, but

rather how to change individual words, phrases, and sentences. They have internalized a formulaic check-list to use when revising and these check-lists provide a discriminating measurement by which a student can judge the mis-match between what his composition does and what he thinks it should do to receive a good grade.

Even such potentially holistic concepts as unity or form mean to these students that a conclusion should have an introduction, a body, and a conclusion, or the sum total of the necessary parts. As with Daniel and Michael, the other six student writers check to see if they have an introduction with a thesis statement and a conclusion that does not repeat the introduction. One reason that addition is such a minor operation for these students is because the only time they perceived a need to add something was to add a concluding sentence to a paragraph or to add a two sentence conclusion to the composition. The students realized that their compositions would not be unified and would not meet their revision check-lists if they lacked a concluding part.

(3) Revision as an activity of making lexical changes but not semantic changes

A prevailing attitude these student writers share toward revision is that they do not see revision as an activity taking place on the level of ideas. In approaching the "Ana" passage, for instance, the students saw the paragraph in terms of vocabulary not as units of thought. The students

suggested that the author of the 'Ana" passage should find a substitute for the word mysterious, but none of the students suggested that may b e the idea shouldn't be there at all.

The fact that only 10 changes out of the 333 total changes took place on the thema level can be accounted for by examining these students' revision check-lists. The only changes on the thema level took place when the students either reordered ideas or wrote two or three introductions as Daniel did. These students use a thesis statement in their introductions as a controlling device, but the result is to restrict and circumscribe not only the development of their ideas, but also their ability to change the direction of these ideas. As Jeremy said, "I check sentences to make sure that they are correct. I don't check ideas, they just have to happen."

An important issue here is the relation between the students' theory of revision and the extent to which they revise. Because they do not see revision as an activity on the idea level, they feel that if they know what they want to say then there is little reason for making many changes from draft to draft. The students equate the ease of writing with the need for no changes. Consistently the students replied when asked why they had not made any more changes, "I did not get stuck on individual words, so why should I make any more changes," or "I knew something larger was wrong, so why would it help me to change words around."

Conclusions:

From an analysis of the student writers' three compositions, the transcripts of three interviews, and their suggested revisions of the "Ana" passage, the following set of conclusions can be drawn about the congruence between these eight student writers' theory and practice of the revision process.

(1) These student writers have developed a consistent set of revision strategies for the expressive, explanatory, and persuasive modes. They are highly consistent in the degree of revision across the three compositions and their revisions occur in a very narrow range. The consistency of their strategies correlates with the limited nature of their strategies.

(2) The student writers have over-generalized the principles of effective writing that they have been taught and their strategies are an amalgam of what they have learned through instruction and what they have inferred from their observations of written language.

(3) Their revision strategies only help the student writers on a word to sentence level and do not help them handle the whole composition. They see their composition as a series of parts and their strategies are inappropriate for handling larger units of discourse.

(4) The student writers often knew they needed to revise, that "something larger was wrong," but they lacked an alternative set of strategies. It is not that students unwillingly revise, but rather not knowing what to do, they do what they know how, in a consistently narrow and predictable way.

(5) A question drawn from the above four points is how much dissonance can these student writers tolerate while revising? Dissonance is defined here as the lack of congruence between what a text does and what the writer feels it should do. It would seem that these student writers have developed very refined mechanisms to reduce the amount of dissonance and to allow them to seek closure, or exit from the demands of the writing task very quickly. One primary mechanism for all eight student writers was to avoid writing about difficult and unfamiliar subjects and to resort to writing about something they had written about before. The students have developed ways to limit the amount of changes they need to make, to reduce the amount of writing that needs to be crossed out, and to blind them from seeing any mis-match between what their composition does and what it could do.

PROFILE OF AN EXPERIENCED WRITER: SARAH

Background

Sarah is an editor for a major Boston publishing house, an art critic for a Boston feminist newspaper, a free-lance writer, and a professional artist. She majored in biology at Smith College, has taught biology and composition courses, and defines herself as an artist, a writer, and a scientist. She writes on a daily basis--journals, letters, poetry, essays, and says that wherever she is, she is constantly taking notes on people, places, and buildings, carrying on a dialogue with life through her writing.

Operational Definition of Revision

Sarah uses the word rewriting, and to her rewriting is "a matter of looking at the kernel of what I have written, the content, and then thinking about it, responding to it, making decisions, and actually restructuring. I never set a limit on the numbers of drafts, but most of my writing is done in three drafts. I write, rewrite, and then rewrite to the extent that I feel my writing is ready.

"I think it is important to allow some time to lapse between the writing and rewriting of drafts. Although there is no rule that governs my behavior, I know when I have an objective view and can feel somewhat detached but have not lost the original reason for writing then I know that I am ready to go back and rewrite. The distance in

time helps me to visualize my writing, to see how one idea articulates with another, and how the ideas need to be reassembled."

Sarah's rewriting method was very similar for each composition.

Day_1----------Writing lists of thoughts and random associations on topic; writing first draft.

Day_2----------Revising first draft; writing second draft.

Day_3----------Revising second draft; writing third draft.

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Sarah made a total of 363 changes for the three compositions she revised. She made 117 changes for the expressive composition, 137 changes for the explanatory, and 109 changes for the persuasive composition. Table 12 presents the frequency of revision by level and by operation.

TABLE 12

Frequency of Revision: Experienced Writer Sarah

Level	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	10	14	10	7	41
Phrase	15	24	21	5	65
Sentence	86	46	64	14	210
Thema	21	X	16	10	47
Total	132	84	111	36	363

Characterization of Revision

Table 13 presents a representative sampling of the type of changes Sarah made. Listed in the table are: (1) the change made; (2) the place where the change was made; (3) the cue that told Sarah to make the change; and (4) the extended reason Sarah gave for making the change.

TABLE 13

Characterization of Revisions: Experienced Writer Sarah

Deletion			
Word Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
billions	2d draft 3d sentence Explanatory	the word billions	I was exaggerating and it sounded like the kind of hyperbole I use when talking. I wanted to be accurate and exact and to have my argument taken seriously.
Phrase Deletion balsy and gutsy language	2d draft 5th paragraph Persuasive	the phrase was a distraction	I wrote it in my first draft because I thought the phrase would show how tough I am. I was trying to tell my reader that I was 'with it' but then I decided that I didn't need to do that. My argument was strong enough and this isn't my kind of language anyway.
Sentence Deletion There is a women's language and a men's language.	2d draft first sentence Persuasive	the language was too dry and too academic	I wanted a strong beginning that had structure. When I wrote that sentence, I thought it was successful. I thought it was a good launching pad, but when I returned to the writing after a day, I didn't think it had strength. I was charging the statement with so much meaning, but the statement had no meaning.

Sentence Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
It was my ears and brain that needed washing.	2d draft 7th paragraph Persuasive	preceding sentence	When I reread the draft, I realized the power of the preceding sentence. I cut this sentence out because it was a distraction. It went off in a direction, amputated the thought and weakened it. The thought was funnier without this sentence.
Men's language and women's language evolved separately.	1st draft 5th paragraph Persuasive	didn't fit	I thought this sentence was an aside and didn't seem to fit with the rest of the ideas as they were emerging. I also thought it would distract a thorough reader by creating questions. I only wanted to substantiate what I could.
I'm baffled because there is enough information in the press to at least create uneasiness about environmental pollutants as the stuff that might just do a lot of people in.	1st draft 3d paragraph Explanatory	the sentence rambled	This sentence was just part of a stream of consciousness. Writing it down helped me to understand what I wanted to say, but I didn't need the sentence in the essay.

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Thema Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
Last year a 24-hour test using simple bacteria was developed that was highly reliable in identifying carcinogens.	2d draft 8th paragraph Explanatory	wasn't exact enough	I couldn't name the test and I decided to drop it. I realized that I could use this idea as a backup if anyone challenged me. I would add this idea and find the exact name of the test if I was going to do a longer piece on this topic.
I asked a woman architect if she had ever encountered any communication problems working with male coleagues. She told me about....	1st draft 3d paragraph Persuasive	weakened essay	This example didn't have the sense of presence, the vividness that the other examples did. It took too long too explain and I felt that the essay as a whole needed short and punchy anecdotes. This one I had to set up and explain too much.
I remember wondering how long people could go on tolerating the injustices of Viet Nam War. I despaired....	1st draft 5th paragraph Explanatory	emotional tone	In writing the second draft, I dropped the personal tone and dropped the three examples which seemed too self-indulgent. My own emotion was coming out and the essay wasn't working; I wasn't being convincing.

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Substitution

Word Substitution	Place	Cue	Reason Given
a. she b. woman	3d draft 1st paragraph Persuasive	pronoun she	I write in pronouns, but I rewrite with nouns. A reader gets more on the track by giving him nouns--never let the reader doubt and be forced to go back and reread. Changing she to a woman was a change in the meaning of the sentence. It refers to the specific arguments; it is support for the argument.
Phrase Substitution			
a. do you know of: b. are there?	3d draft 1st sentence Persuasive	preposition of	It sounded awkward to end the question with a preposition. I decided that the way the question was worded was wrong. I wanted to give form to my writing and to challenge my reader, but the way it was phrased made it sound threatening and like an obvious challenge.
a. several years ago b. In 1975	2d draft 3d sentence Explanatory	the phrase several years ago	I realized that the phrasing wasn't very exact and that I knew the exact year. I needed to be matter of fact and precise with every detail.

Sentence Substitution	Place	Cue	Reason Given
a. It seems so suicidal; a society so cavalier, ignoring the facts, and stubbornly refusing to act on the cancer information we have. b. Is this cavalier attitude towards cancer the result of ignorance or stubborness?	2d draft 3d paragraph Explanatory	sequence of ideas	I felt that at this point in the essay, a question would be easier for a reader to accept than an assertion. There is a big difference between making a statement and asking a question. I think that I am more convincing and keep the argument on my side by asking a question.
a. What is women's language? b. Is there a women's language?	2d draft 3d paragraph Persuasive	the phrase <u>what is</u>	I realized that the way the sentence was phrased, it wasn't a good question. It is a transitional sentence and there is an assumption. I needed to take the reader back and give him the question that I wanted him to ask at this point.

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Addition

Word Added	Place	Cue	Reason Given
environmental	3d draft 1st paragraph Explanatory	needed a specific word	I needed to relate back to my main argument by being as specific as possible.
Phrase Added			
a sport-hybrid like an exotic butterfly	3d draft 8th graph Persuasive	the image came to mind	I had solved all the major problems and I was embellishing my writing by adding images and nuances. I liked this one and thought it was a nice touch.
prime-time	3d draft 5th paragraph Persuasive	tone of essay	The phrase was in the back of my mind the whole time I was rewriting. I didn't want to use it because it is so commonly used and sounds so slick. Then I realized that I could use it and use it to my advantage, so I did.

Sentence Added	Place	Cue	Reason Given
It all seemed so admirable ten years ago.	2d draft 1st paragraph Expressive	A missing link in the chain of reasoning.	This was a complimentary thought to the one preceding it. By reordering ideas in the paragarph, this sentence was needed for balance to complete the thought.
The women in the programs are foils for the men, not core characters; the men in the ads are raison d'êtres.	2d draft 5th paragarph Persuasive	Anticipated Reader's objections.	I wanted to be honest and taken seriously and I realized that my exaggeration wasn't 100% true. I heard my readers saying contradictory things to me and I wanted to be able to answer them all.
To paraphrase Henry Higgins, "Why can't a woman talk more like a man" and vice-versa?	2d draft last sentence Persuasive	Needed concluding sentence.	I didn't want to end seriously. I realized that my reader didn't want that. I would not convince the reader by being my serious self. I needed to end on a humorous tone--the Henry Higgins quote came into my head, it often comes into my head, and I thought I would use it here.

Thema Added

It is possible that sex-linked language once held survival value and are now troublesome vestigial organs.	2d draft Last paragraph Persuasive	Important idea to add	I discovered this idea in the process of writing about this topic. I have never thought about this issue this way before and I like this idea.

Reordering

Word Reordered	Place	Cue	Reason Given
cure	2d draft 8th paragraph Explanatory	Awkwardness	The sentence was worded so that the emphasis wasn't where it should be. It was more forceful and emphatic this way.
Phrase Reordered			
highly publicized	3d draft 5th paragraph Explanatory	balance	By reordering the phrase, the sentence had a sense of rhythm and the paragaph was balanced better.
Sentence Reordered			
Hundreds of people who have died of cancer have had their bodies frozen in anticipation of a cancer cure in the 20th century.	2d draft 2d sentence to 4th sentence Explanatory	Sequence of ideas	I added two sentences to the first paragraph because the idea needed to be developed more before this sentence came.
Thema Reordered			
I believe that all things are one yet each entity perceived is unique. This belief can be eclipsed by the values of society....	last paragraph of 1st draft to 1st paragraph of 2d draft. Expressive.	the idea	After I wrote my first draft and wrote that last paragraph, I realized that it should be my first paragraph. I discovered this idea while writing and I think it was the general idea that linked all my examples together.

Scale of Concerns

The following section presents Sarah's scale of concerns from most important to least important and her discussion of these concerns.

TABLE 14

Scale of Concerns: Experienced Writer Sarah

SCALE	CONCERNS
Concern 1	Finding a Form
Concern 2	Eliminating Distractions and Tightening Up
Concern 3	Readership
Concern 4	Craft
Concern 5	Role of Writer as Editor
Concern 6	Role of Writer as Reader

Concern 1 Finding a Form

Sarah defines her first draft as a time "for getting ideas down, exploring meaning, and not being concerned with anything else." She often relies on a very obvious and overt form to give a semblance of structure to her writing before she knows if she has a definite position or before she recognizes the general development and direction of her ideas. In the first draft of her explanatory composition she used the form, "I have evidence for this distinction....

A second piece of evidence is.... This leads me to my third and fourth pieces of evidence...." Sarah sees this overt form as a cliched way of writing and as a crutch for her. "I have a tendency, because I was trained as a scientist and have written educational materials, to be explicit and to tell people exactly what I want to tell them. It is more challenging to me not to use an obvious form and to give my writing substance and structure without this crutch. I want to weave a pattern throughout the writing but not a pattern that is so obvious that a reader is aware of its superstructure. I approach the problem of form by seizing upon one theme, eliminating a lot of others, and finding a controlling metaphor to give structure to my second and third draft."

Concern 2 Eliminating Distractions and Tightening up

Sarah stated that her rewriting "weapons" were elimination and organization. "My second draft is the throwing-away draft. I ask if I really need something and if not, I throw away and do without. I know now from years of writing that there are a lot of things that I need to write down in a first draft just to help me develop my thinking and to explore the horizon level of a topic. They are necessary and sometimes refreshing for me as a writer, but I don't want to give my reader all the detours of my thinking. I recognize these instances because they either read like rambling streams of consciousness from my journal or just

stick out because of their emotional and syntactical awkwardness with the grammar and logic falling apart. Then there is also the situation that my first drafts usually contain a lot of questions. I use these questions to guide my thinking. Usually they are echoes in my head as I am writing. But when I rewrite, I eliminate them. I believe in the power of questions, but these questions are for the writer, they wouldn't reverberate for a reader, they wouldn't take a reader forward, and they would only distract."

Sarah's decision to eliminate distractions and delete ideas from her first and second drafts is strongly influenced by her sense of her role and purpose as a writer. As she explained, "As a writer, I feel a dramatic committment to present strong support for my world of ideas. Once I plug an idea in to an essay then I feel committed to explain it. In rewriting a draft, I often see that an idea is not clear, that it needs to be much more tightly explained, and that is a sign to me that either I have not thought about it enough or that it is going to take too much information to explain. Rather than doing injustice to the idea or misrepresenting it, I drop it from the particular essay, put it on reserve, and usually use it another time when I can."

Concern 3 Readership

Sarah thinks of her readerhsip as an abstract body of uninformed average citizens and her revision process is

heavily influenced by her strong desire to convert these citizens into active participants in her work. "I always feel that I have a readership and I don't want my readers to be bored or passive. I want to challenge my reader and increase his interest in my argument. I believe, however, that there is a five-year time lag between my level of information and that of my average reader. But I predict that my reader does not know he is uninformed. He may read U. S. News & World Report every week and think he is very informed. I amagine also that my reader will probably have a different value system and set of attitudes on political questions than I have."

Sarah predicts and then deals with her reader by taking into account her readers' expectations and biases. She wants to control and manipulate a shared knowledge base with her reader and has developed a wide range of revision strategies for this purpose. These strategies divide into four categories: (a) Tone; (b) Language; (c) Content; (d) Pace.

(a) Tone: Sarah is very conscious of the importance of the tone of her essay. She decided for the persuasive composition that the way to arouse strong feelings but not antagonize a reader was through humor. She explained: "I often use exaggeration and caricature in my writing because many people will not listen to me on certain topics. Usually I

don't know in my first draft that the piece will take a humorous direction, but the tone develops as I rewrite and I try to find ways to dramatize my position through humor in order to get a reader to listen to me."

In her rewriting of the explanatory composition, Sarah felt that the tone of the essay was too personal and that the essay was not working. As she explained, "I know that it is easy for me to take a crusading and radical position when I write. I have to control this. When I reread what I have written, I realize that I will turn my reader off and that I need to be objective and reasonable. It is harder for me to write this way, but I feel if I am going to have an effect upon my reader and convince him then I have to."

(b) Language: Sarah's strategy is to choose words from a subset of words that she shares with her reader. She prefers simple language and is sensitive to the associations certain words carry. She explained, "I want my reader to be continually moving ahead and never be confused by my choice of words nor be forced to go back and reread what I have written because he doesn't understand my language. I want to keep my reader hooked and on the line."

(c) Content: Sarah uses concrete examples and anecdotes from her readers' world of experience in order to clarify her abstractions and generalizations and ground her perceptions

in her readers' world. Her intention is that her reader will be able to interpret and understand her writing easily. She deleted an example about a nuclear power reactor (when redefining the cancer problem) because she felt that there were too many assumptions behind the example and many readers might not see the connections so the example would be ineffective. She decided to use the examples of smoking and red dye #2 instead because "they just need to be named and the reader understands the connection; there is no need for a lengthy explanation."

(d) Pace: Sarah asks herself what her essay needs for pace and for rhythm in order to meet her reader's needs. Her idea is to challenge her reader, but to maintain a sense of pacing so that a reader will not recognize he is being challenged and will not be given too much work at certain pivotal points in the essay. She is conscious of not using transitional sentences which presume too much knowledge and adds sentences when she feels that a psychological gap has been created and that a reader's expectations need to be satisfied.

Concern 4 Craft

Sarah does not consciously examine individual words, phrases, or sentences until she has solved the major structural problems in any essay. She explained: "I believe that it is important for a writer not to concentrate on individual words or sentences in the writing of a first

draft or a second draft. If I played around with words in a first or second draft or thought about individual sentences then I would be distracted from my meaning and I would lose the pattern I was creating. It is when the pattern is down, and I feel comfortable that the form is there, that the thought has been spun out, then I can think about craftsmanship and can make nuances and adjustments which are fun. There is a certain feeling that I have when I realize that I have solved the major issues in an essay. I feel as if I can enhance and add embellishments. I love to be at this point. It is the artistic and creative level for me. It is the point where I am not worried about the technical aspects anymore or struggling with ideas. I have the sense of power and play and I can add my own joy, spirit, and expression."

Concern 5 Role of Writer as Editor

Sarah feels that her experience as an editor has trained her to read her own writing with a sense of detachment. She becomes writer as editor when revising, selecting her stylistic preferences and reading with an eye for alternatives. She explained: "As editor of my own writing, I feel that it is important to be detached so I can observe what is and what is not happening in my own writing. I know from my experience as an editor working with other writers that it is important for a writer not to become too involved with his writing too early so that he can decide what to keep and what to leave out. As editor of my own writing, I read for accuracy of detail and for condensing and simplifying."

Concern 6 Role of Writer as Reader

With time and distance between drafts, Sarah develops a retrospective posture as reader of her own work. She explained: "It is important for me to read my writing not as the writer, nor as the editor, who has been involved in the production process, but as a reader who has not been involved. I attach so much feeling to my ideas when I write them. With distance, however, I see the words, just the bare words without any feeling attached to them when I originally wrote them down. It is an immediate recognition. If I read a sentence and ask 'What did I mean by this?' then I know something needs to be changed. If a word, sentence, or idea seems forced, ambiguous, or distracting to me as a reader then I know that I, as a writer, better do some rethinking and more rewriting."

Strategies for Revising the "Ana" Passage

Sarah wrote the following two paragraph critique of the "Ana" passage:

> The writer's main topic of concern in this paragraph appears in the last sentence and not the customary first sentence. As a consequence, the reader follows a train of thoughts trying to get a handle on the writer's intended message. My first impressions were that I was being introduced to the person Ana--that it was a psychological portrait of an introduction to a short story or a novel. What it seems the writer intended, however, was an essay on an idea that applied to many people of which Ana was only an example or a close-to-home embodiment of the problem the writer felt moved to write about.

I would rewrite the composition by first presenting the idea that many students are discontent with college. Then I would explore the nature of this discontent and its possible causes. At this point, I would quote Ana's reasons why she isn't returning to college second semester. I would add new material concerning a re-evaluation of the need for college education and the quality and content of the education in the changing and emerging new society.

Although there is a great contrast between the level of writing in the "Ana" passage and Sarah's writing, there was a striking similarity between her approach to the passage and her own scale of concerns when revising. As her comments indicate, Sarah shows great concern for helping the author of the "Ana" passage find some type of form to embody her ideas. Her suggestions to seize one idea and to add and expand on various ideas which are not fully developed in the original passage, suggests the importance Sarah places on using the full range of revision operations. Sarah made no comments about lexical or syntactical difficulties and assumed that the author of the passage needed first to attend to the larger semantic and structural problems before making surface level corrections.

Conclusions:

What role does revision play in Sarah's composing process?

Sarah feels that it is important to revise extensively in order not to be dominated and constrained by the language and ideas of a first draft. She knows that any first draft she writes needs serious revisions and she is alert to the internal textual cues which tell her to revise. When revising, Sarah begins to feel the direction that her ideas are going in and she finds ways to support and strengthen them. Her drafts are very different structurally and she solves different problems as she moves from draft to draft.

What is Sarah's theory of the revision process?

Sarah's revision process is a balancing of her concerns for form, readership, and craft. It is only with the revising of different drafts that she can handle the artistic, structural, and technical demands of writing. Her process is one of adding, deleting, substituting, and reordering on all levels as she visualizes potential choices which could clarify her meaning.

Sarah's revision process is hierarchial in nature and she has different levels of concerns for each draft. She approaches her second draft knowing that she must delete a number of ideas and sentences and find the kernel idea of the essay. She tries not to consciously examine words or sentences until writing a third draft since she believes

that it would distract her from her meaning and she would lose the pattern she is creating.

Sarah has developed a repertoire of strategies to help her balance her concerns for her reader and her concerns for her roles as editor and reader of her own work. She must satisfy the needs of her reader, test for congruency to see if she has satisfied those needs, and satisfy the needs of the writer as reader. Sarah stops revising when she has solved all the major issues and has removed any obstacles she has noticed as writer, editor, and reader of her own work.

PROFILE OF AN EXPERIENCED WRITER: REBECCA

Background

Rebecca, a lawyer and a journalist, writes a weekly legal column for a Boston newspaper, does free-lance political writing, and writes legal briefs and memoranda for her law practice. She majored in classics at Brown and feels that being a classics major has been the best writing instruction she could have received; every sentence she writes is effortless for her in terms of grammar, diction, and correctness. She feels that she can "eyeball" a word right away and know its meaning and implication and that she does not feel the need to inflate her language as many journalists do with Latin compounds.

Operational Definition of Revision

Rebecca uses the word rewriting which to her means, "a major overhaul of any ideas that have been written. I take what I have written, cross things out, make a lot of changes and usually end up with something totally different from what I had written in my first draft. From experience, I know that my first draft is usually too haphazard and incomprehensible. Usually I am repulsed by the incoherence of my first draft and I need to make major changes in substance and structure from my first draft to my second draft. I feel that I move at a geometric rate after a first draft, as

the writing goes somewhat quicker and the rate of recovery and the approach to something relatively good speeds up.

"My cardinal rule in rewriting is to never fall in love with what I have written in a first or second draft. An idea, sentence, or even a phrase that looks catchy, I don't trust. Part of this idea is to wait a while. I am much more in love with something after I have written it than I am a day or two later. It is much easier to change anything with time."

Rebecca spent the three hours which were given to her to write and revise each composition in a very consistent way.

Day_1----------Writing down random thoughts usually in rough outline form; re-ordering ideas in terms of importance; writing first draft.

Day_2----------Revising first draft; writing second draft.

Day_3----------Revising second draft; writing third draft.

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Rebecca made a total of 242 changes for the three compositions she revised. She made 97 changes for the expressive composition, 74 changes for the explanatory composition, and 71 changes for the persuasive composition. Table 15 presents the frequency of revision by type and by operation.

TABLE 15

Frequency of Revision: Experienced Writer Rebecca

Level	Operation				
	Deletion	Substitution	Addition	Reordering	Total
Word	8	20	17	2	47
Phrase	6	18	23	7	54
Sentence	35	26	32	11	104
Thema	18	X	13	6	37
Total	67	64	85	26	242

Characterization of Revisions

Table 16 presents a representative sampling of the type of changes Rebecca made. Listed in the table are: (1) the change made; (2) the place where the change was made; (3) the cue that told Rebecca to make the change; and (4) the extended reason Rebecca gave for making the change.

TABLE 16

Characterization of Revisions: Adult Writer Rebecca

Deletion

Word Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
somehow	Explanatory Third draft 2d paragraph	sounded like my speech pattern	"Assuming that I had a position to take, I wanted to be as forceful and direct as possible. The word somehow in the sentence was not very definite and only weakened my position. It is the type of word I use in a verbal argument to soften my position."
Phrase Deletion			
inarticulated apprehensions	Explanatory Third draft 3d paragraph	didn't trust the phrase	"I liked that phrase but I didn't trust it. It is part of the idea of not becoming attached to anything I have written. I realized that it was redundant to leave this phrase in because the idea was subsumed in another all encompassing sentence."
Sentence Deletion			
I know little of life's deeper philosophies.	Expressive 2d draft 3d paragraph	sounded like a cliche	"I read that sentence and I thought to myself that it sounded like someone who didn't know what he was talking about. It didn't work."

Thema Deletion	Place	Cue	Reason Given
I couldn't even get past three weeks of weekly repression of self to find happiness in scouting.	Expressive Second draft 4th paragraph	the balance between this idea and the following idea was wrong.	"I realized that the idea didn't really say anything. And more importantly it wasn't even accurate. Scouting is not really weekly repression. A reader would have recognized that right away."

Substitution

Word Substitution

a. some nations' growth b. some nations' capacities	Explanatory Second Draft 3d paragraph	the word growth	"I read the sentence and I realized that growth didn't express the idea that I was trying to develop. I wasn't sure at that time what exactly the idea was, but I settled upon the word capacities knowing it wasn't the exact word, but that it would do."

Phrase Substitution

a. different from the masses b. cut above the masses	Expressive Second draft First paragraph	the word different	"I realized that the way it was first phrased, it made me sound different, like an Albino, or as if I had two heads. I didn't just want to express the idea of difference, but the feeling of being superior to. The phrase, cut above seems closer to that meaning."

Scale of Concerns

The following section presents Rebecca's scale of concerns from most important to least important and her discussion of these concerns. For a visual outline of Rebecca's scale of concerns see Table 17.

TABLE 17

Scale of Concerns: Adult Writer Rebecca

Scale	Concerns
Concern 1	Be an advocate--write from a persuasive stance Discover argument
Concern 2	Work beyond thought cliches
Concern 3	Develop logical structure
Concern 4	Improve communicative quality of essay
Concern 5	Rework introductory paragraph
Concern 6	Rework individual sentences
Concern 7	Tune-up
Concern 8	Assume Role of Reader

Concern 1 Be an Advocate--write from a persuasive stance Discover Argument

Rebecca's primary concern no matter which mode she is writing in is to be an advocate and to write from a persuasive stance. She explained: "I want to say something in my

writing, take a point of view, move off from the center point of neutrality and move to a position of advocacy. After all, writing an essay is not the same thing as making a laundry list; I'm not just listing points."

Rebecca's major revision strategy for all three compositions was to discover her arguments and sub-arguments. She knows from experience that in order to achieve a clear pattern of thought she must try different ideas, different versions of each idea, so as to see the relationships between these ideas. She compared herself to an actor trying on different costumes to see which fit and experimenting with different roles to see which role was the most natural. It is important for her to play around with different ideas in a first or second draft in order to get closer to her subject and her reason for writing. Rebecca feels that whether an individual idea is synthesized, transformed, or deleted it is still important for her in developing her argument and in understanding the relationship between various ideas in the argument.

Concern 2 Work beyond thought cliches

Rebecca has learned from experience that in order to discover her argument she must first work beyond the thought cliches which surface in her first draft. Rebecca explained: "Thoughts just come out as I write, like the sentence I wrote in the second essay (the expressive), 'But you'll

never be the same again this you know and will never forget.' Now that sentence sounds like a paraphrase of Hemingway and Keats but watered down. These paraphrasings probably come from reading so much literature. I don't notice it when I am writing a first draft, but when I go back to read my draft, I realize that my style sounds like someone else's and that my language is reverberating a little too much of someone else, and that there is little genuine thought to what I have written. These paraphrasings are important clues to me, however, because when I recognize these instances, I know immediately that I must strike them out, rethink what I have written, and work beyond the clichéd thought."

Concern 3 Develop logical structure

As an argument begins to take shape, Rebecca begins to ask what the essay as a whole needs, begins to observe what kind of logical structure has emerged from her argument. In her revising of all three compositions, what could not be absorbed in the structure she deleted. Rebecca believed that in order to express one set of thoughts she had to delete other ideas no matter how much they appealed to her.

One way that Rebecca tests to see whether or not an idea can be absorbed into the structure of her composition is to return to her original reason for writing. She feels that she is always implicitly or explicitly answering some question when she writes and she uses that controlling question as a background discriminating force.

Concern 4 Improve Communicative quality of essay

Rebecca has developed a set of strategies which she calls her "communication strategies." She explained: I have learned that writing and communicating are not the same activities. Consequently, a necessary rewriting objective for me after I have found my argument is to improve the communicative quality of my writing. I begin to think of a reader and the idea of a reader spurs me on. If someone is going to read my writing then I want my ideas to flow so that they are understandable. If my writing does not communicate to a reader then it is not worth much."

Rebecca revises with the questions--what communicates to a reader? What keeps a reader? What loses a reader? She imagines a reader who does not always agree with her point of view and she knows that this difference necessitates certain communicative strategies. She explained: "As I rewrite, I hear my reader's arguments. I have an imaginary conversation with my reader--'yes, on one hand we have this, but on the other hand we have that; and yes, you may be right about x, but what about y?'" Part of her strategy is to use language which will keep her reader's attention focused on her line of reasoning. As she explained: "I try not to use words or expressions that are hyperboles because a reader will recognize them as such and they will take a reader's attention away. Also, I think that foreign words or esoteric vocabulary only loses a reader and I try to avoid using words which I think my reader will have difficulty with. I would hate to sound like Bill Buckley."

Concern 5 Rework introductory paragraph

From her experience as a journalist, Rebecca has internalized the guiding principle of the importance of a good lead and she reworks her introductory paragraph in order to achieve a graceful and forceful beginning. Her intention is to catch her reader's attention from the first paragraph and push the reader towards her side. Rebecca explained: "I work a long time on the introductory paragraph. Not when I write a first draft but when I write and rewrite my second and third drafts. After I work and rework my first paragraph, then I am more content to write sentences, tuning up as I go along, knowing they won't be perfect, but that it is easier to tune up in the body later if you have the confidence of a good beginning. A good beginning gives me the sense that the essay is going somewhere."

Concern 6 Rework individual sentences

Rebecca's reworking of individual sentences is influenced by her theory of good writing and her sense for what syntactical patterns strengthen and weaken an essay. She explained: "I feel that some grammatical constructions create more difficulties for readers than others and I don't want a reader to have to puzzle out the meaning of a clause within a clause."

Rebecca's reworking of individual sentences reflects her desire to communicate her argument in the most precise and positive language possible. Two major strategies for

syntactical changes were: (1) "I always try to express a statement in a direct action verb rather than a to be verb. I write with to be verbs and rewrite with direct action verbs. For instance, I'd rather say, 'I do it' than 'I am in the process of doing it.' The state of being verbs are just the weakest kind of verbs and really weaken the force of an argument." (2) "Too many of my sentences sound like spoken English than written English. This always happens. My first drafts are reflections of my speech patterns, too colloquial and not very forceful, but I always know that by the second or third drafts, I will rework my sentences to sound more like written language."

Concern 7 Tune-up

Rebecca refers to the final changes she makes in a third draft as "tuning-up." She explained: "Tuning-up is mainly a matter of diction, a way to iron things out and decorate or embellish the writing if necessary. I leave the mechanics of paragraphing, punctuation, and spelling until the final draft since they never bother me and I know that I can always take care of them. I believe that long paragraphs lose more readers than they keep and I usually create more paragraphs as a tuning-up in the final draft. If I read a sentence that begins with a phrase, 'In any event,' or with the word, 'moreover,' then I know that these are possibly places for new paragraphs."

Sound and alliteration are important aspects for Rebecca in tuning-up. In the third draft of the explanatory essay, she added the phrase, "politicians and populace alike" because she liked the sound of the phrase. Rebecca labels this type of change "a Christmas-tree ornament," and said that it is only possible for her to make an ornamental change in a third draft after she has solved all the major problems of substance and structure.

As part of her tuning-up process, Rebecca focuses her attention upon individual words and discrete parts of speech. She rewrites with verbs and adjectives to increase the specificity and accuracy of her argument. As she explained, "I write with nouns and rewrite with adjectives. I look at specific verbs to see whether they carry my meaning and are the most precise expression possible."

Concern 8 Assume Role of Reader

With time and distance between drafts, Rebecca is able to assume the posture of writer-as-reader. This is the final step of her revision process. As she explained: "I try to pose myself as a reader of my work and imagine how it would be for someone else to read my writing. I try to look at my writing as an 'objective person' would. I need to do this because too often what I write seems clear to me, but going back and reading it as a reader would, I notice that certain words seem unclear and then I realize that the thought behind them is not clear. It is a retrospective posture that I try to assume."

Rebecca's Strategies for Revising the "Ana" passage

Realizing that there are several revision possibilities in the "Ana" passage, Rebecca decided to take two major tacks. First she gave a list of suggestions for surface level corrections and then she wrote a paragraph summarizing her suggestions for structural, thematic and rhetorical changes. Part 1 presents Rebecca's list of suggestions and part 2 contains her summary paragraph.

Part 1

(1) The word mysterious is the wrong word.

(2) The author should ask herself if the second sentence is vital?

(3) The third sentence should be included as a phrase or clause but not as an entire sentence.

(4) If the composition deals with problems of college instruction, then the fourth sentence needs more explanation or should be excluded.

(5) The sixth sentence should be recast; it is awkward.

(6) The author should avoid passives and use them only in dire necessity.

(7) The ninth sentence doesn't flow. It begins with the phrase, 'As a result'--the reader wnats to know, as a result of what?

(8) The phrase 'so many others' has no referrent--who are the others?

(9) The author needs to be more specific. The last sentence doesn't make sense, 'keeping students happy...' Creating student contentment is not a goal of college instruction. The author needs to rethink this idea.

Part 2

"The last sentence has little to do with the essay topic which, as I understood it, deals with the dilemma and the problems students face in college: paying for degrees that may be of little practical value. This composition moves from the specific case of one student's dissatisfaction with college to the general and widespread reasons for such dissatisfaction. This structure simply does not work and forces the reader through several sentences before she comes to the point of the essay. Common sense alone dictates that the reader should learn as soon as possible what the author is driving at. There are two topics. The author needs to figure out which topic will be the central topic before she begins to rewrite."

Although Rebecca was puzzled by this task and wondered whether it was an "idiot test," there was still a close correlation between her suggestions for revising "Ana" and her own scale of concerns. Rebecca's analysis of the "Ana" paragraph is that the paragraph has no point of view, the reader asks, "So what?", and there is no solid line of reasoning that a reader can follow. As with Rebecca's scale of concerns for her own writing, she asks what does the essay as a whole need and is very concerned about a reader's needs and expectations.

Conclusions:

What role does revision play in Rebecca's composing process?

Rebecca extensively revises and feels that "rewriting is the essence of writing." She does not see her writing process as a linear sequence of actions with revising as the end sequence, but rather as a recursive process with revising part of the on-going exploratory process. Even the 'last step' in her revision process, 'assuming the role of a reader' can force her back into the cycle again, restructuring her argument and reworking individual sentences.

Rebecca defines a draft as one sitting no matter how many rewritings it takes and considers revision the only available means for discovering an argument. With subsequent drafts she not only gets closer to her line of reasoning, but also her rhetorical purpose for writing. As she gets closer to her argument and defines her structure, examples and sentences are dropped so that everything is kept consistent. Rebecca calls this the "domino effect" since a higher order change (a change in argument) forces a lower order change (syntactical deletions) to keep the congruity and continuity of the essay.

What is Rebecca's theory of the revision process?

Rebecca's revision process covers the full range of operations and levels. Her major concern is to discover her argument and she has a well-developed set of heuristics to aid her in this process. She is alert to internal textual

cues looking for sentences that do not logically follow and ideas that are not sequenced logically. By deleting and adding ideas and sentences, Rebecca begins to hone in on her subject and recognize the relationship between various ideas in her argument.

Rebecca uses a different standard of judgment for her second draft than for her third draft. Her attention is first focused upon solving problems of substance and structure and then attending to the reworking of individual sentences and specific language and style problems.

She is very conscious of her role as a writer when she is revising; a writer who wants to have a clear style of communication and who knows that certain strategies are necessitated if she wants to maintain a readership. She has fictionalized a reader who doesn't always agree with her but whose presence spurs her on.

THE SEVEN EXPERIENCED WRITERS: A SYNTHESIS

In this section the case studies of Rebecca and Sarah are compared with the case studies of the five other experienced writers. The purpose of this comparison is to note the commonalities and differences within the group, to construct a synthesis of the group, and to infer a set of conclusions about the revision processes of these seven experienced writers. This section is divided into seven sub-sections: (1) Background, (2) Generalizations about the Composing Process, (3) Operational Definitions of Revision, (4) Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation, (5) Scale of Concerns, (6) Theory of the Revision Process, and (7) Conclusions.

Background

A common characteristic which links these seven experienced writers is their commitment to and enjoyment of both writing and reading. They have chosen to write: they described their passion for writing as an obsession or a compulsion, and they agreed that even if it was illegal to write, they would do it anyway. They see writing and reading as companion activities and attribute their stylistic flexibility as writers to the models of good writing they have read. Sonya's explanation was typical: "I often read a piece of prose like a watch-maker taking a clock apart

and looking at all the mechanisms. I try to figure out why a particular sentence affected me, where it came in the order of the paragraph, what came before, what after, how the sentence or the paragraph was constructed? I think that in the process of abstracting what it was that affected me, I internalize some principles of writing. I use these principles and they are a lot more useful to me than reading a list of someone else's abstractions of methods of good writing."

Generalizations about the Composing Process

Whether the experienced writers actually use the word process or not, they collectively define composing as an activity of intellectual and pyschological exploration. They view the act of composing as a heuristic, a way to discover connections between ideas. Debra explained, "Writing forces me to be precise and to express ideas concretely. Initially, I do not think in terms of words. I think in terms of visual-relationships and kinesthetics. I work ideas out into language as I write, and the subtlety of the ideas develops in the process of writing."

The experienced writers use different methods of development to begin writing. Some use rough outlines, others use streams of consciousness of random thoughts and associations on the topic, and others make mental notes and wait until they are ready to begin writing a full first draft. Linking these different methods are some common

principles and generalizations about the composing process of these seven experienced writers.

(1) These experienced writers view composing as a process of creating meaning from draft to draft; a process of defining and redefining, selecting and rejecting ideas.

(2) Although their preconceptions direct their first draft, they do not expect to know before writing what shape a final draft will take. The act of composing modifies their thinking about a given topic and motivates a corresponding change in the writing.

Operational Definitions of Revision

All of the experienced writers either use the words revision or rewriting and have very detailed definitions to describe the type of changes they make. The following is a brief description of how the five experienced writers besides Rebecca and Sarah, define their revision process.

Debra: I use both terms rewriting and revision. Rewriting means the deep structural changes, the content. Revising means the surface changes, word and phrases. Rewriting is the global process, revising the local process. In re-writing, I am more audience oriented. I am not actually thinking who I am writing to, but I am more aware that I am trying to explain something to someone. Usually in a first draft I am just trying to define my territory and figure out what I am going to say. When I rewriting the second and third drafts, I take the ideas and make them into an essay. It is easier for me to rewrite if I leave a day between. With time, rewriting becomes more interesting; it seems to require less energy than it would the same day it is written. With time, I realize that the original things I wrote were not as interesting as I first thought.

Diana: I use the word rewriting. I rewrite as I write. It is hard to tell what is a first draft because it is not determined by time. In one draft, I might cross out three pages, write two, cross out a fourth, rewrite it, and call it a draft. I am constantly writing and rewriting. I can only conceptualize so much in my first draft, only so much information can be held in my head at one time and my rewriting efforts are a reflection of how much information I can encompass at one time. There are levels and agendas which I have to attend to in each draft.

Johana: I say rewriting and rewriting means, on one level, finding the argument, and on another level, language changes. Most of the time I feel as if I can go on rewriting forever. There is always one part of a piece that I could keep working on. It is always difficult to know at what point to 'abandon' a piece of writing. I like this idea that a piece of writing is never finished, just abandoned.

My first draft is usually very scattered. In rewriting, I find the line of the argument. After the argument is resolved, I am much more interested in word choice and phrasing.

Leah: I use the word rewriting in its most literal meaning. I always have to re-write, to see my writing. I can not cross things out and write new things on top. I do a lot of thinking before I begin to write and I usually have most of my ideas down in afirst draft, but I have them the wrong way, or they lack a focus and I have said too much about one idea and not enough about another. In rewriting, I realize which ideas I want to emphasize. I do alot of editing in my head. In my final draft, I tighten up my language to make it as economical as possible. I am not as apt to come up with new ideas in a final draft because I don't want to completely rework them. I am more willing to experiment in earlier drafts.

Sonya: Revising means taking apart what I have written and putting it back together again. I ask major theoretical questions of my ideas, respond to those questions, and think of proportion and structure. I find out which ideas can be developed and which should be dropped. I am constantly chiseling and changing as I revise. I usually start from scratch each draft on the principle that in the first draft I worked out my feelings, and in a second draft I figured out what

> I thought, and this out-pouring should carry me on to begin a better version in a third draft. I hate to be confined by the language of what I have written. It is easier for me to take the ideas and start again.

Frequency of Revision by Level and by Operation

Table 18 presents the frequency of revision by level and by operation for the five experienced writers besides Rebecca and Sarah and for the group as a whole.

TABLE 18

FREQUENCY OF REVISION: EXPERIENCED WRITERS

DEBRA 199 changes

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	6	5	4	0	15
PHRASE	15	10	11	4	40
SENTENCE	35	14	51	8	108
TEHMA	14	X	17	5	36
TOTAL	70	29	83	17	199

DIANA 231 changes

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	8	5	10	7	30
PHRASE	10	15	18	5	48
SENTENCE	35	16	42	18	111
THEMA	16	X	18	8	42
TOTAL	69	36	88	38	231

JOHANA 255 changes

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	11	10	17	6	44
PHRASE	14	16	23	9	62
SENTENCE	26	16	34	10	86
THEMA	15	X	11	7	33
TOTAL	66	42	85	32	225

LEAH 273 changes

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	5	6	11	4	26
PHRASE	16	12	20	6	54
SENTENCE	43	35	50	21	149
THEMA	18	X	13	13	44
TOTAL	82	53	94	44	273

SONYA 451 changes

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	12	6	8	3	29
PHRASE	20	17	20	6	63
SENTENCE	98	31	162	8	299
THEMA	20	X	30	10	60
TOTAL	150	54	220	27	451

Total changes of all seven experienced writers = 2094

Seven experienced writers

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	60	66	77	29	232
PHRASE	96	122	136	36	490
SENTENCE	358	184	435	96	1073
THEMA	122	X	118	59	299
TOTAL	636	372	766	220	2094

Scale of Concerns

Two primary concerns are common to the revision strategies of these seven experienced writers: (1) Concern for form of argument; (2) Concern for readership.

(1) Concern for form of argument

Like Rebecca and Sarah, the other five experienced writers describe their primary objective when revising as a concern for finding the form or shape of their argument. Although the metaphorical terminology varies, all of the experienced writers use structural expressions such as "Finding a framework, a pattern, or a design for their argument. When questioned about this primary emphasis upon from the experienced writers' responses fell in two categories:

(i) Since their first drafts are usually scattered attempts to define their territory, their first objective in writing a second draft is to begin observing general patterns of development and deciding what should be included and what should be excluded from the essay. As Diana explained, "I have learned from experience that I need to keep writing a first draft until I figure out what I want to say. Then in a second draft, I begin to see the structure of an argument and how all the various sub-arguments which are buried beneath the surface of all those sentences are related."

(ii) The recognition that comes during revising, that there is an argument for or against a certain topic, motivates a change in thinking about the topic and consequently a change in what is written. As a parallel operation to finding an argument, the need to make writing sequential forces the writers to work beyond surface connections and to see subtle relationships between various ideas in their argument. As Leah explained: "I have learned that my first drafts are usually filled with the most obvious connections between ideas. They are the first things that occur to me as I am writing and I write them down. But the connections usually go farther and in rewriting I begin to see connections between ideas which I previously did not understand."

(2) Concern for readership

The experienced writers have conceptualized a reader whose existence strongly influences their revision process.

They begin to judge their work from the perspective of an "internalized other." The adults described their "reader" in different ways; Sonya writes to the person she was five years ago; Diana writes to the person who sits next to her on the sub-way; and Debra writes to a reader with whom she can have a Socratic dialogue. Whoever their reader is, this abstract sense of an "other" functions for these experienced writers in the following ways:

(i) The experienced writers have abstracted and internalized the standards of a reader. This "reader" is partially a refraction of themselves and functions as a critical and productive collaborator. The idea of a reader's judgement causes dissonance and forces the adults to make revisions on all levels.

(ii) The experienced writers believe they have learned the causes and conditions which will influence their reader and they work when revising towards creating these causes and conditions. They demonstrate a complex understanding of which examples, sentences, or phrases should be included or excluded. For example, Johana's decision to delete public examples and add private examples because the "private examples would be less controversial and more persuasive;" Debra's change in transitional sentences because she "recognized that some kinds of transitions are more easily recognized as transitions than others;" Leah's addition of the phrase, objective correllative, because it "was an expedient way of saying what I wanted to say and a reader would recognize it as such;" these examples are

representative of the strategic attempts these experienced writers use to manipulate discourse conventions and communicate to their reader. These writers view writing as communication, not as arts gratia.

Theory of the Revision Process

There are two characteristics of these experienced writers' theory of revision: (1) Revision from a holistic perspective; (2) Revision as a recursive process.

(1) Revision from a holistic perspective

A question which dominates the revision process of these experienced writers is--what does my essay as a whole need for form/balance/rhythm/language/communication? The experienced writers view their writing from a holistic perspective and abstract and predict what kinds of revisions need to be made. Details are added, dropped, reordered, or substituted according to their sense of what the essay needs for emphasis and portion. This sense, however, is constantly in flux as ideas are developed and transformed. As their ideas change, the act of revision for these writers is an attempt to make their writing consonant with that changing vision.

(2) Revision as a recursive process

From the interviews and from their compositions, it can be inferred that these experienced writers see their revision process as a recursive process with different levels of attention

and different agenda for each cycle. During the first cycle their attention is primarily directed towards narrowing the topic and getting closer to the meaning of their ideas. In this cycle, they are not as concerned about vocabulary and style and are more interested in what will be said than how it will be said. They explain that they get closer to their meaning by not limiting themselves too early to lexical and syntactical concerns. Diana's comment inspired by the summer 1977 New York power failure explains her process: "I feel like Con Edison cutting off certain states to keep the generators going. In a first and second drafts, I try to cut off as much as I can of my editing generator and in a third draft,I try to cut off some of my idea generators so I can make sure that I will actually finish the essay."

Although the experienced writers describe their revision process as a series of different levels or cycles, it is inaccurate to assume that they have only one objective for each cycle and that each cycle can be defined by a different objective. It is more accurate to say that the same objectives and sub-processes are present in each cycle, but in <u>different proportions; a different weighting property is given to different sub-processes of the revision process during different cycles.</u> Even though these experienced writers place the predominant weight upon finding the form of their argument during the first cycle (the major strategies are adding and deleting ideas), still other sub-processes are present (deleting, adding,

substituting words, phrases, and sentences) but in a very reduced scale. Conversely, during later cycles when the experienced writers' primary attention is focused upon stylistic concerns, they are still attuned (although in a reduced way) to the form of the argument.

Conclusions

From an analysis of these experienced writers' three compositions, the transcripts of three interviews, and their suggestions for the revision of the "Ana" passage, the following conclusions can be drawn about the congruence between these seven experienced writers' theory and practice of the revision process.

(1) These experienced writers see revision as the essence of writing. They feel the necessity to synthesize thinking and composition flaws all first draft. Without revision and synthesis, the "product is typing, not writing."

(2) The experienced writers list the factors of time and distance between the writing of drafts as necessary conditions for revision. With time, revision becomes more interesting and allows them to see their writing with a more objective eye.

(3) The search for a clear form for an argument is both a heuristic and communicative device. By making a body of ideas readily intelligible to a reader, these writers are exerting control over the previously amorphous phantasms of thought and in this way evince a capacity to make language work for them

in embodying and refining their ideas.

(4) These experienced writers believe that writing and communicating are not the same activities and that a necessary revision objective is to improve the communicative quality of their writing. They are very conscious of their roles as writers and have developed a wide range of strategies to balance their concerns for their reader's expectations and biases.

(5) These experienced writers characteristically reveal a much greater tolerance for what Dewey called "an attitude of suspended conclusion." They do not use the same standard of judgment when revising draft one as they do for draft two and are able to "suspend" their range of concerns when revising.

(6) These experienced writers do not see the composing process as a linear sequence of actions, but rather as a recursive process with revision as part of the generative nature of the process. There is no check-list or fixed sequence for them in which the sub-processes of the revision process occur, a retrospective posture can force a writer back into the cycle. For these experienced writers, however, there is a definite sequence to the weighting proportions they give to each sub-process.

The Student Writers and the Experienced Adult Writers: A Comparison

In this section the case studies of the eight student writers and the seven experienced writers are compared. The purpose of this comparison is to use the same theoretical constructs which have been used in previous sections as points of comparison to detail the commonalities and differences between the two groups. This section is divided into three sub-sections: (1) Characteristics of Revision Cues by Operation; (2) Scale of Concerns; and (3) Theory of the Revision Process.

Characteristics of Revision Cues by Operation

During each interview, writers were asked about specific changes they made and the cue that signaled to them the need for a change. These questions were asked in order to determine how various textual cues--lexical, syntactical, semantic, or rhetorical, tell writers that they need to make changes. The investigator looked for patterns to the cues writers responsed to. The following table presents the characteristics of the most frequent revision cues by operation for each group. This table was constructed from the subjects' responses during the interviews.

TABLE 19

CHARACTERISTICS OF REVISION CUES BY OPERATION FOR STUDENT WRITERS

OPERATION	CUE
Deletion	Repetition of words and phrases Excess words Clichés Digressions
Substitution	Repetition of words and phrases Need for a higher register vocabulary--sounds too much like speech Need for more accurate or specific vocabulary
Addition	Need for a transitional word Need for a smooth transition between paragraphs Need for a concluding sentence at end of paragraph or end of composition
Reordering	Need to save strongest argument for last paragraph Need for emphasis

CHARACTERISTICS OF REVISION CUES BY OPERATION FOR EXPERIENCED WRITERS

OPERATION	CUE
Deletion	Doesn't say what I want to say or intended to say Couldn't be absorbed into the form of the composition Need more evidence/need to do more research Reader is left with a feeling of "so what?" Not congruent with the tone of the composition

OPERATION	CUE
Deletion	Not interesting in the writing or in the reading More appropriate for a longer composition Wrong level of specificity or generality Digressions
Substitution	More congruent with form More congruent with tone Need for more precise phrasing Recognition of the difference between speech and writing
Addition	Discovered idea in writing Needed balance and symmetry of ideas Need for unity Need for clarity/accuracy/ exactness Reader's expectations Need for a transition
Reordering	Sequence of ideas Shift of emphasis For pacing and balancing

As Table 19 shows, the student writers responded mainly to lexical cues whereas the experienced writers responded to a wider variety of cues on all levels. The most overwhelmingly significant cue for the student writers is lexical repetition and syntactical repetition which is lexically formulated. They list repetition as the element they worry about the most when revising and always view it as an undesirable quality in writing. The cue signals to them that they need to eliminate the lexical repetition either by substitution or deletion. Lexical repetition functions as a cue to the experienced writers, but the meaning of the cue is completely

different. The experienced writers use the cue to alert them to problems on a deeper level. One experienced writer who realized that she had repeated the word types too often in the same paragraph used the lexical cue as a catalyst to show her that the tone of the composition was too imprecise and too general. The experienced writers do not see repetition as necessarily as undesirable quality but rather deliberately use parallel constructions based on repetition as a rhetorical device for adding strength to their writing.

Scale of Concerns

The theoretical construct of a scale on concerns was developed for each writer and each group of writers in order to determine: (1) What was the writer's primary concern, secondary concern, etc. when revising? (2) What strategies did the writers use to operationalize their concerns?

For the student writers, the most important concern was vocabulary. They see a word as the primary unit of meaning and place a symbolic importance on their selection and rejection of words as the determiners of success or failure for their compostions. With the exprienced writers, although vocabulary is important, they see clusters of words and sentences as the primary units of meaning and try not to force their attention upon "embellishing" the language of their compositions until their argument is formulated.

For the experienced writers, the primary concern is finding a form for their argument and all else is subordinated

to the search for form. Form, to these writers, is a pattern or sequence of ideas which must be constructed from a scattered first draft. To the student writers, form is a minor concern. They perceive form in a conventional textbook fashion; a composition if it is to have form needs a formal introduction, body, and conclusion. Their search for form is a check to see if their composition has the sum total of the necessary three parts.

The writer-reader relationship is a concern for both groups. The experienced writers see themselves consciously, sometimes self-consciously, in the role of a writer who uses rhetorical conventions that a reader will recognize to influence the reader. Their interpretation of their reader's expectations influence their revision strategies on all levels. The student writers' understanding of revision as a rule-governed behavior and of a reader who expects compliance with these "rules for revising" dominates their revision strategies. The students' reported that 99% of all of their writing has been directed towards their teachers and that their revision strategies are directed towards their teacher as reader. They think of a reader who will examine individual parts of their compositions, not the composition as a whole which is why the students' revision strategies only help them with lexical problems and not larger discourse problems. The students envision a reader as an interrogator who will cite them for violations of the rules for revising rather than responding to their ideas. Britton has hypothesized that a

writer's capacity to accomodate his reader, to predict and deal with the implied demands of a reader might be one aspect of development (Britton, 1976). The experienced writers' ability to not only fictionalize a reader and cast their reader in a role, but also to develop a consciously dramatic role for themselves as writers is clearly one developmental difference between the experienced writers and the student writers.

Theory of the Revision Process

In attempting to determine a writer's theory of the revision process, the investigator sought answers to the questions: (1) What did the writer aim for when revising? (2) When and where did the writer make changes on the word, phrase, sentence, thema levels? Was there a pattern to these changes? (3) Did the writer use all four oeprations of the revision process? Table 20 presents a comparison of the frequency of revision by level and by operation for both groups.

TABLE 20

FREQUENCY OF REVISION: STUDENT WRITERS AND EXPERIENCED WRITERS

8 student writers

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	48	65	13	1	127
PHRASE	38	59	10	3	110

	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
SENTENCE	44	16	14	2	76
THEMA	13	X	3	4	20
TOTAL	143	140	40	10	333

7 experienced writers

LEVEL	OPERATION				
	DELETION	SUBSTITUTION	ADDITION	REORDERING	TOTAL
WORD	60	66	77	29	232
PHRASE	96	122	136	36	490
SENTENCE	358	184	435	96	1073
THEMA	122	X	118	59	299
TOTAL	636	372	766	220	2094

As Table 20 shows, the concentration of changes for the student writers is on the word and phrase level. The students have a molecular approach to revision focusing upon individual words and phrases and determining their revision by what these individual parts need. For the experienced writers, the heaviest concentration of changes is on the sentence level and the changes are predominately deletion and addition. The experienced writers are able to view their compositions from a holistic approach and make changes according to what the composition as a whole needs.

As Table 20 clearly points out, the experienced writers

revise more and the character of their revisions are different. The experienced writers see the different levels and agenda of the revision process and try to stratify their concerns during each cycle. They attempt to use a different standard of judgement for draft one than for draft two and suspend certain sets of concerns while others are operationalized. By shifting the weight and focus of their concerns during different cycles of revision, the experienced writers are able to process and balance more dissonance while revising. The student writers use a similar standard of judgement to evaluate their first drafts as they do for their second drafts and they seek closure from the writing task as quickly as possible. They see the writing tasks as assignments and take the directions of the assignments very literally. If the assignment asks them, "Why do you agree with the quote, state your reason," they check to see if they have given their reason, and if so, they have met the directions of the assignment.

The student writers believe that if they are "inspired", and if the writing of a composition is easy for them, then there is little reason for making many changes. If they don't get stuck on individual words or phrases, they see no reason to revise. Also, they have developed methods to avoid revising by not taking risks, not writing about difficult or unfamiliar subjects, and by using a safe and secure composing method. When the student writers realized, however, that they

needed to revise but decided not to, it was because,(1) they knew something "larger was wrong", but didn't know what or how to revise: (2) they saw that one change would necessitate many more changes and didn't think the effort is worthwhile; (3) they reported that their writing wasn't very good and that it wouldn't help them to "move words around."

In comparing the revision process of the experienced writers and that of the student writers', one concludes that the experienced writers have learned how to tolerate a high degree of dissonance while revising and have the strategies available to them to balance a large number of operations and cognitive demands.

CHAPTER IV

CONCLUSIONS AND IMPLICATIONS

Three primary objectives have motivated this study:

(1) To describe and analyze the revision processes of a group of college freshmen and a group of experienced adult writers.

(2) To develop a set of theoretical constructs as points of comparison to detail the commonalities and differences within and between these two groups.

(3) To use these findings as a basis for developing a theory of the revision process.

In order to meet these objectives, eight college freshmen and seven experienced adult writers wrote three compositions, rewrote each composition two times, suggested revisions for a composition written by an anonymous author, and were interviewed three times. The previous chapter presented two case studies from each group, a synthesis of each group, and a comparison of the two groups. This chapter presents a set of conclusions about the revision processes of both groups and a set of implications for both future research and for the teaching of composition. The conclusions are organized under the following categories: Revision Process of Student Writers and Experienced writers and Towards a Model of the Revision Process.

Revision Process of Student Writers and Experienced Writers

The case study methodology provided the investigator with the opportunity to closely observe the revision processes of eight student writers and seven experienced writers. Guiding this observation were two central sets of questions:

(1) Do writers have theories of the revision process? If so, how do these theories influence the type of revisions they make and the role of revision in their composing process?

(2) What revision strategies do these writers use? What cues signal to the writers the need to revise?

The conclusions in this section will be organized under these two sets of questions.

Theory of the Revision Process

The student writers in this study have operational procedures for revising and they have reasons to explain their procedures. These procedures, however, have not been codified nor synthesized into a theory of the revision process. Their practice is congruent with their lack of theory and their revision strategies are dictated by their atheoretical process.

The experienced writers in this study have a codified set of principles about how their revision process works. They understand the relationship and the implicational rules between their principles and the operations they use. Their

theories give them operational control over their process and form the basis for their revision strategies.

The principal conclusion of this study is that the control writers exert over their revision process is directly related to their theory of the process.

Revision Strategies

1) The student writers have a consistent scale of concerns with which they approach the revision of each writing task. The consistency runs across writers and across modes. They use the same standard of judgement to evaluate each draft. Consistently, their primary concern is vocabulary.

The experienced writers in this study have a consistent scale of concerns with which they approach the revision of each writing task, but they alter their scale of concerns for each successive draft. The primary revision concern for all experienced writers is observing general patterns of development in their first draft and finding a form for their argument.

2) The consistency of the student writers' revision strategies correlates with the limited nature of their strategies. Their strategies help them revise only what is written on the page. Their strategies are geared for looking at individual words or phrases. They lack alternative strategies for handling larger units of discourse than the sentence or for revising from a holistic perspective.

The experienced writers have a well developed set of

heuristics which guided their revision strategies. They are able to abstract ideas and patterns and to predict what is necessary from draft to draft. They stratify their concerns by using a wide range of strategies on all levels.
3) The most significant textual cue to the student writers is lexical repetition. Their primary revision strategy is lexical substitution and they reword their sentences to resolve lexical problems, thus resolving the immediate problem, but blinding them from seeing problems on a conceptual level.

The experienced writers get closer to their intended meaning by not limiting themselves too early in the writing of a composition to lexical concerns. They respond to textual cues on the lexical, syntactial, semantic, and rhetorical levels. Their major revision strategies are semantic strategies.
4) The students do not see their writing through their own eyes, but rather through the eyes of their former teachers or their surrogates, the textbooks. Students have over-generalized the rules of effective writing that they have been taught, mechanically apply these rules, and are <u>bound</u> to the rules which they have been taught. The reasoning and logic behind these rules are left unexamined. The students follow a narrow set of procedures which they do not fully understand.

The experienced writers have the background of inst r uction but have gone beyond what they have been taught and no longer

use external standards to evaluate their writing. They have extrapolated and questioned what they have been taught, recombined the rules, and recognized new possibilities. They rely on an internalized sense of what constitutes good writing.

5) The student writers understand the revision process as a rule-governed behavior. They view the writer-reader relationship as the relationship of an interogatee to an interrogator. They revise with the image of a reader as an interrogator who will cite them for violation of the rules for revising.

The experienced writers have internalized the standards of a reader. This reader is partially a refraction of themselves and functions in the role of a critical and productive joint-partnership. Their revision strategies represent attempts to manipulate discourse conventions and communicate to their reader.

A clear developmental difference between the experienced writers and the student writers is the experienced writers' ability to fictionalize their reader, cast their reader in a role, and develop consciously dramatic roles for themselves as writers.

6) Revision strategies for both student writers and experienced writers did not vary across the three modes: expressive, explanatory, persuasive. Although discourse theorists claim that writers think and plan in different ways for different modes of writing, (Kinneavy, 1967: Britton, 1975)

the conclusion from this study contradicts that claim for the revision process. These writers brought a consistent set of assumptions to each writing task.

Toward a Model of the Revision Process

A principle conclusion of this study is that revision is not a single, discrete stage in the composing process. The conventional conception of revision has been that it is the final stage in the process. The assumption behind this conception is that the composing process is linearly sequenced such that each stage is mutually exclusive: whatever happens during revision is characteristically different from what happens during the pre-writing or writing stages.

The evidence from this study clearly indicates that to the experienced writers revision is not a stage, but rather a process that occurs throughout the writing of their work. Their first drafts are already the results of an elaborate revision process in which their revision theories have operated rejecting some ideas (words, phrases, and sentences) and selecting others. Consequently, their revision processes do not meet the principle requirements of a linear system: we can not tell where one stage begins and the other ends. Thus, the evidence from this study calls for a rejection of the linear stage theory since it does not incorporate the behavior of the experienced writers and is not an accurate account of their composing process.

The evidence from this study points to the idea of a recursive process; a process characterized by significant recurring patterns and the repetition of the same operations during different cycles. (A cycle is not the same thing as a stage since it can not be defined by a single objective or process.) Central to a recursive process is the idea that the same objectives and sub-processes are present in each cycle, but in different proportions; a different weighting property is given to different sub-processes of the revision process during different cycles. Since writers are limited by what they can attend to during each cycle, revision strategies help balance competing demands on attention. Thus, writers can concentrate on more than one objective at a time by developing strategies to suspend their range of revision concerns.

Based on the conclusions from this study, the following theoretical model of the revision process is offered. Throughout this study the concept of dissonance has been used as a construct to explain how a writer senses the lack of congruence between what a text does and what the writer thinks it should do. This model has three components: sensing dissonance, tolerating dissonance, and resolving dissonance.

Sensing Dissonance

As writers read what they have written, they become aware of problems by noticing specific types of cues. It

can be a lexical cue: "This word is not the right word." A syntactical cue: "This sentence is awkward." A semantic cue: "This idea doesn't connect with anything else." Or a rhetorical cue: "I don't think a reader will understand this example; it won't be effective."

The cue does not simply provoke a response, but rather seems to provide an entry point into what appears to be a circuitry system. However, the specific inter-action between cues and circuitry system and the strength of associations between points in the circuitry system may be different for each writer. The configuration of points in the circuitry, then, would be a representation of a writer's theory of the process. Since writers give different weight and different proportion to different operations, they will respond differently to the connections between the cues. The points in the circuitry system probably cluster into process concepts to form part/whole hierarchies: for example, deciding to reorder ideas is part of knowing a priori or of coming to know the order or sequence of ideas.

Sensing dissonance, then, is a function of: (1) the amount of dissonance caused by a cue; (2) the strategies available to a writer to handle the dissonance. When the writer senses dissonance, the writer can decide to change, wait to change, or decide not to change.

Reasons for deciding to change: (1) Writer sees in words what has only been understood visually or conceptually, but the words do not approximate the writer's prior sense of order.

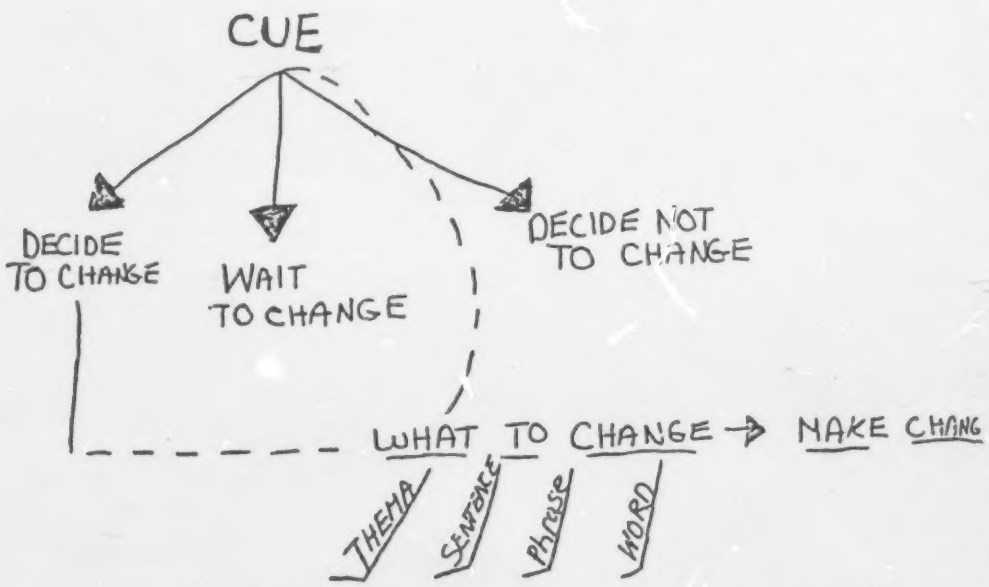
(2) Writer is aware of inconsistencies and contradictions between original plans and the text. (3) The text does what the writer intended, but the process of writing has transformed the writer's intention.

Reasons for deciding to wait to change: (1) Writer senses the need to change something but doesn't know what to change or how to change and decides to wait. (2) Writer senses the need to change, knows how to change immediate problem, but decides to wait because another change might negate the need to change the immediate problem.

Reasons for deciding not to change: (1) Writer does not know what to change or how to change. (2) Writer decides that the change is not necessary or worthwhile.

Figure 2

REVISION MODEL



Tolerating Dissonance

Dissonance can be sensed on multiple levels and thus writers need multiple strategies for tolerating dissonance. The meta-strategy is to develop a scale of concerns which functions: (1) to allow writers to suspend certain concerns while others are being operationalized: (2) to shift the weight and focus of concerns so that more dissonance can be tolerated while revising; (3) to expand a writer's scale of concerns thus adding to the potential for more dissonance; the writer senses more dissonance which creates the need to develop more strategies to handle the dissonance. These revision strategies are sequencing strategies which help writers balance the demands on their attention. This idea follows a cybernetic model of attention that asserts that writers do not process simultaneous demands on their attention. Attention is finite and can only be directed towards one item at any given time. However, a writer can handle more than one oepration in one task only because it is done sequentially. Certain low-level operations (spelling, punctuation) must become automatic so that a writer does not become overwhelmed with lower order concerns. When lower-order concerns impose minimal dissonance, a writer can attend to them later and attend to higher level concerns (sequence of ideas) first.

Resolving Dissonance

How writers decide to resolve dissonance will depend upon:

(1) the strategies available to them and (2) the amount of dissonance sensed. A writer can decide to use any of the four operations (deletion, substitution, addition, reordering) and use these operations on any of the four levels (word, phrase, sentence, thema) until the writer feels the dissonance is resolved.

The cycle is, of course, continuous, for an attempt to resolve dissonance can create more dissonance. A change on the sentence level can force further changes on a lower (phrase or word) level, or a change on a lower level can force a writer to sense dissonance on a higher level. For instance, "the problem wasn't one of awkward syntax but rather a confused thought."

The process, then, is one of testing for congruency. There is a constant probability for more dissonance to be generated, and the revision cycle continues until the writer resolves enough of the dissonance to be satisfied with the product. Consequently, the resolution of dissonance seems to be determined by the ability to perceive dissonance, by the availability of strategies to resolve it, and by the writer's desire to produce the product; that is, by the writer's involvement in the product.

IMPLICATIONS FOR RESEARCH

One power of the case study methodology is that it allows an investigator to begin with a broad question and from a detailed observation of a few individuals emerge with

a more complex set of questions for future research.

This case study began with the broad question,"what is the revision process of college freshmen and of experienced adult writers?" The conclusions from this case study have evoked issues which call into question basic conceptions of the entire composing process and point to the need for future theoretical research on the composing process.

From the many possible ways this study can be interpreted for future research, the following implications are offered:

(1) Implications for Theoretical Studies on the Composing Process;

(2) Implications for Methodology; (3) Implications for Writing Development.

Theoretical Studies on the Composing Process

One purpose of this study was to view the revision process from a theoretical perspective and to develop a set of theoretical constructs from which the process could be studied. Those theoretical constructs need further development and testing. The model of revision which was developed from the evidence in this study is highly speculative and spawns a series of research questions. A much more detailed description is need of the writer's specific revision strategies and of relationship among these strategies. The concept of dissonance needs further development as do the

ways in which lexical and syntactical cues function in creating and resolving dissonance. A major implication of this study is that we need to research the various levels of sub-processes which constitute the revision process. We need to develop more complex models and test those models with basic research. The current research on information processing models might provide a method for explaining this complex behavior and for understanding hierarchial relations.

This study focused only upon revision and the role of revision in the composing process. The evidence from this study indicates that the linear stage model of the composing process does not provide an adequate account of composing behavior. Consequently, future studies should focus not only on changes made during revision, but also on the entire composing process. One possible interpretation of the results from this study is that revising and composing use the same processes but in a different order.

The evidence from this study suggests that one important area of theoretical research is on the question of the nature of the constraints of written language. The degree to which writers are dominated by their writing and feel that the previously generated language imposes intolerable constraints is evidenced in the frequency with which a writer finds it necessary to delete and start again. We need to know more about the linguistic code of written language and

about the contraints of written language before we make global contrasting statements about what experienced writers can do and what student writers can not do. The question needs to be asked, given the constraints of written language, what are the controlling possibilities for revision? The evidence from this study points to a hypothesis that writers are limited by what they have written and that there are a finite amount of ways to revise on a sentence level. There is also a concomitant issue: it seems that writers write using given information, and revise using additional information; therefore, we need to know how they evaluate the informational content of a sentence.

Implications for Methodology

There is an obvious need to continue studying the process the writer uses and a need to continue to refine techniques for capturing the process.

This study relied heavily on writers' introspections and reflections. Although a writer can provide a generous bounty of information for an investigator still there are problems when writers attempt to recreate the actual process they went through when they revised. Researchers have had success with protocal analysis (Flowers, Hayes, 1977) and another possible way to tap the process might be to train writers to use tape recorders to talk about what they are doing while they are revising. The transcripts from these

tapes could be used as additional material to help the writer recreate the actual 'process' during an interview.

Another implication for methodology from this study is that there is much value to be found in using short passages such as the "Ana" passage which was used in this study or the controlled stimulus passages developed by Hunt (1970) and Smith (1974). The "Ana" passage proved to be a reliable and efficient methodology to test a writers' theory of the revision process. The question of what cues a writer responds to could be effectively studied by giving writers various short passages and manipulating the cues.

Implications for Writing Development

Although this research indicates the need for further basic research, it more clearly indicates our need for more precise models of the writing process and of the development of that process in students. The conclusions from this study point to the need for understanding students' assumptions about the process and helping them develop a theory of the process. However, we first must research what assumptions writers have at different grade levels. Some of the different questions which will be important to research are: is there a developmental sequence in the different revision operations? For instance, reordering was a strategy not used by the students in this study. It might represent a developmental point: the ability to see the parts in a composition as

moveable and to see a pattern of organization that demands rearrangement. Thus, reordering might be a product of development, not only in a writer's scale of concerns but also in his ability to operationalize his concerns.

This study provided evidence supporting Britton's hypothesis that a writer's capacity to accommodate a reader, to predict and deal with the implied demands of a reader is one aspect of writing development. But we need further research on what an inexperienced writer needs to know about a reader and on how the awareness of a reader develops and expands.

We need models which will help us understand how experienced writers compose so that our models of instruction will be theoretically based on process analysis not product analysis. Such models will provide the necessary framework for research on the evolution of writers' theories of writing, particularly on how writers recombine the rules that they have been taught and thus learn to rely on their own theories and less on the dicta of their teachers.

Implications for the Teaching of Composition

The strongest implication from this study for the teaching of composition is that teachers should recognize that although students lack a synthesized theory of revision they do have a well developed set of assumptions about the revision process. Such a recognition argues for the following:

1) It is essential to understand students' assumptions.

If an instructor knows that his students' strategies are primarily lexical strategies, then the instructor could work with students to develop alternative strategies for handling larger units of discourse.

2) A composition curriculum could be developed using students' assumptions as a model for instruction. Both students and adults commented that they found the methodology used in this study to be helpful in their writing. They felt that the methodology helped them to become more informed writers and clarified for them why they do what they do when they revise.

3) It is necessary to give students realistic models of how professional writers write. The students in this study had false models about how a professional writer writes, and these models often interferred with their attempts to revise. The students have romantic conceptions of writers writing perfect first drafts and thus feel that composers are divided into only two groups: those whose words flow from pen to paper and those (like themselves) whose every word must be wrenched out. Students need to see more than the rhetoric of a finished page. Giving students an author's revisions could give them a deeper understanding of the possibilities and uses of language and show them how a writer transforms and revises what has been written.

4) A clear implication from this study is the need for a consistent set of terms about written composition. The teaching of composition proceeds from the assumption that

teachers and students share such a common language. Evidence from this study, however, indicates that students do not understand revision as an activity of "seeing again." In order for a student to make the effort to revise, he must understand that revision means more than just moving words around. Hirsch (1977) has suggested that to learn writing is to learn revision principles and that the most efficient way of teaching composition will probably turn out to be the most efficient way of teaching revision. Yet it is not enough for teachers just to explain the etymology of the word revision. If students are not able to see their writing with their own eyes they will not be able to see it again through the eyes of a reader.

The evidence in this study indicates that a more efficient way of teaching revision might be by teaching students to first rely on their own internalized sense of good writing and to see their writing with their own eyes.

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